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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON IBN SHIHĀB AL-ZUHRĪ*

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Abū Bakr Muhammad b. Muslim b. ‘Ubaydallāh b. ‘Abdallāh b. Shihāb b. ‘Abdallāh b. al-Hārith b. Zuhrah b. Kilāb,¹ better known as Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri (d. 124/742), was one of the founders of Islamic tradition in the widest sense of the word.² After a life rich in pioneering scientific achievements, he died at his estate where he retired in his later years. Details of al-Zuhri’s biography are discussed in the first three sections of the present study, while the last three deal with geographical aspects of his estate. The emphasis on the geographical

* This paper was presented at the Sixth International Colloquium ‘From Jāhiyya to Islam’ (Jerusalem, 5–10 September 1993). I wish to thank Prof. M.J. Kister, Dr. Amikam Elad and Mr. Avraham Hakim for their references. The map on p. 52 was drawn by Mrs Tamar Soffer at the Cartography Laboratory of the Geography Department, the Hebrew University.

¹ Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Tabīy fī ansāb al-Qurashiyīn*, ed. M.N. al-Dulaymī (Beirut 1408/1988), 303; Dhababī, *Nubalā'*, V, 326.

² Cf. on him G.H.A. Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Hadith* (Cambridge 1983), 146f (al-Zuhri, ‘perhaps of all *hadith* transmitters occurs most frequently in *isnād*’). Juynboll argues (149) that ‘many of those who had the *nisba* Zuhri ... may often have been addressed by that name or may have asked to be called by it, in so doing creating confusion with the one great transmitter who was alternatively called Zuhri or Ibn Shihāb’. It seems to me that such a phenomenon (if it existed at all) could only have had a marginal effect.

Al-Zuhri’s legal activity and its transmission have recently been studied – in my mind convincingly and with much common sense – by H. Motzki, ‘Der Fiqh des Zuhri: die Quellenproblematik’, *Der Islam* 68 (1991), 1–44. Elsewhere Motzki remarks that Ibn Jurayj always refers to him as Ibn Shihāb, while others, such as Ma’mar b. Rāshid, refer to him by the *nisba* al-Zuhri. Motzki plausibly ascribes this to regional preferences; see his *Die Anfänge der islamischen Jurisprudenz. Ihre Entwicklung in Mekka bis zur Mitte des 2./8. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart 1991), 194f. With regard to the sobriquet Ibn Shihāb, note that a poet called him, in a verse, Muhammad b. Shihāb; Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā*, VII, 251. Why was Shihāb used in this sobriquet, rather than an ancestor closer to al-Zuhri? Because compared with the name Muslim and the other names in al-Zuhri’s pedigree, the name Shihāb was rare.

data is methodologically important, as it stems from my conviction that the history of Arabia should be studied with constant reference to the abundant geographical information at our disposal.

1. Al-Zuhri and the Umayyads

The sources now available to us for al-Zuhri's biography³ are far more numerous than those which I. Goldziher had access to when writing, a century ago, about al-Zuhri's relationship with the Umayyads.⁴ But although we are in a position to have more details about al-Zuhri, Goldziher's brilliant analysis of his links with the ruling family still holds. If anything, like good wine it improves with time.⁵ Yet as we shall see, there were attempts to replace Goldziher's realistic (and not at all unsympathetic) approach with a romantic and apologetic view of al-Zuhri's links with the Umayyads. The relationship between the Umayyad rulers and the religious scholars of their time is an important factor in the study of both Islamic history and the emergence of Islamic literature.

With regard to the much-quoted passage from al-Yā'qūbī concerning 'Abd al-Malik's wish to replace the pilgrimage to Mecca, then under Ibn al-Zubayr's control, with pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Goldziher remarks that al-Zuhri 'was given the task of justifying this politically motivated reform of religious life by making up'⁶ and spreading a saying traced back to the Prophet, according to which there are three mosques to which people may make pilgrimages: those in Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem.⁷ Basing himself on a passage from al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Goldziher then adds several paragraphs about al-Zuhri:

How the Umayyads made it their business to put into circulation *hadiths* which seemed to them desirable, and how people of the type of the pious al-Zuhri acquiesced in being their tools — though they certainly were not guided by selfish motives⁸ but merely by reasons of

³ I am particularly indebted to Ibn 'Asākir's *History of Damascus*.

⁴ Goldziher regretted having had no access to Ibn 'Asākir; *Muslim Studies*, ed. S.M. Stern, tr. C.R. Barber and S.M. Stern (London 1967-71), II, 46, n. 1. The most detailed *tarjama* of al-Zuhri used by Juynboll a decade ago (*Muslim Tradition*, 169) was the one found in al-Fasawi's *al-Ma'rifah wa-al-ta'rikh*, I, 620-43.

⁵ *Muslim Studies*, II, 43f.

⁶ This is doubtful. Cf. A. Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship* (Leiden, 1995), 156-7; below, nn. 36, 88.

⁷ *Muslim Studies*, II, 44f. See now in great detail Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem*, 147-63.

⁸ In a footnote Goldziher refers here to al-Zuhri's selflessness, quoting an utterance of 'Amr b. Dīnār; see on it below, n. 63.

state expediency — is to be seen from evidence preserved by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.⁹ Here we find an account ... from 'Abd al-Razzāq (d. 211), a disciple of Ma'mar b. Rāshid (d. 153), in the name of the latter; Ma'mar himself belonged to the group of the disciples of al-Zuhri. This account tells us that the Umayyad Ibrāhīm b. al-Walid ... came to al-Zuhri with *a notebook he had written* [my italics; M.L.], and asked his permission to spread the sayings contained in it as *hadīths* communicated by al-Zuhri. The latter gave his permission easily: 'Who else could have told you the *hadīths*?' Thus the Umayyad was enabled to circulate the contents of his manuscript as texts taught him by al-Zuhri. This account fully confirms the willingness of al-Zuhri ... to promote the interests of the dynasty by religious means. His piety probably caused his conscience to be troubled occasionally but he could not forever resist the pressure of the governing circles. ... Al-Zuhri did not belong to the circle of the irreconcilable but to those who thought a *modus vivendi* with the government was desirable. He did not avoid the court but moved unhesitatingly in the ruler's entourage, and we even see him, during a pilgrimage of al-Hajjāj, among the followers of this bogey of the pious. He was employed by Hishām as tutor to the prince and under Yazid II he even consented to accept the office of judge Al-Zuhri did not have to consider scruples about accepting public office under the Umayyads since he had always shown himself willing to co-operate with the ruling powers.¹⁰

Goldziher's forceful analysis of al-Zuhri's relations with the Umayyads has been strongly attacked in recent years by some contemporary scholars.¹¹ Before studying the details of this onslaught it would be useful to remind ourselves that a student specializing in a particular religion, any religion, sometimes arrives at conclusions which are incompatible with the beliefs held by the adherents of that religion.

⁹ *Kifāyah*, 266. We shall have to return to this evidence later.

¹⁰ *Muslim Studies*, II, 46f. J. Horovitz, 'The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and their Authors', II, *Islamic Culture* 2 (1928), 22-50, at 40, says more accurately that al-Zuhri educated Hishām's children (not just one of them).

¹¹ Cf. however, Kh. 'Athāmina, 'The 'Ulamā' in the Opposition: the "Stick and Carrot" Policy in Early Islam', *The Islamic Quarterly* 36 (1992), 153-78, at 166, who, with reference to Goldziher, speaks of scholars who 'were used by the regime as a vehicle of propaganda to counteract the voices of those who opposed the regime. They were an effective means of propagating traditions which favoured the ruler and defamed his adversaries. In other words, they practised *wad' al-hadīth* ("forging of *hadīth*") or were used to disseminate false traditions.' See also 168f. Also O. Livne-Kafri, 'On Jerusalem in Early Islam', *Cathedra* 51 (1989), 35-66 [in Hebrew], at 52f, who correctly remarks that while a few pious persons fought against the Umayyads and refused to accept government offices, many of them were willing to serve them.

Sensitive issues will inevitably cause a rift between non-Islamic scholarship and orthodox Islamic values. Whilst it is true that in many fields of Islamic studies non-Muslim and Muslim scholars work together towards achieving the same scientific goals, a restatement of the fundamental difference in outlook is necessary, because when that is blurred, hypocrisy and lies emerge.¹²

In recent decades we have been witnessing a conscious attempt to detract from the importance of al-Zuhri's Umayyad connection and to present him as an independent scholar.¹³ But before we turn to the revision of al-Zuhri's relations with the Umayyads, let us look at two points of detail on which Goldziher is said to have misunderstood the Arabic text. It is no accident that both relate to al-Zuhri's relationship with the Umayyads.

First, F. Sezgin challenged Goldziher's interpretation of al-Zuhri's famous statement about the writing down of *hadīth*, *akraha-nā 'alay-hi hā'ulā'i al-umarā'*, which according to Goldziher 'can only be understood on the assumption of al-Zuhri's willingness to lend his name, which was in general esteemed by the Muslim community, to the government's wishes'.¹⁴ Using unambiguous terms G. Schoeler recently reinstated Goldziher's interpretation of this phrase, correctly rejecting Sezgin's translation.¹⁵ Further evidence supports the interpretation of

¹² See also the section entitled *Arabists versus Historians*, in P. Crone, 'Serjeant and Meccan Trade', *Arabica* 39 (1992), 216–40, at 237f.

¹³ This approach is not new; cf. Juynboll, *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature: Discussions in Modern Egypt* (Leiden 1969), 109.

¹⁴ *Muslim Studies* II, 47; see F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (= GAS; Leiden, 1967f), I, 281. Juynboll (*Authenticity*, 112) assumes that 'Goldziher's interpretation is not tenable'. Juynboll (*Muslim Tradition*, 169, n. 32) argues that the version found in *al-Ma'rīfah wa-al-ta'rīkh*, I, 633 (*kunnā lā narā l-kitāb shay'an, [fa-akrahat-nā 'alay-hi al-umarā', fa-ahbabnā an nuwāsiya bayn al-nās]*), 'seems to support Sezgin's interpretation'. Dūrī's translation (*The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs*, ed. and tr. L.I. Conrad (Princeton 1983), 119, is not different from Goldziher's: 'We disliked writing (*al-kitāb*) until the authorities (*al-umarā'*) compelled us to do so; then I decided not to prevent any Muslim from doing likewise.' However, Dūrī qualifies this by adding, 'but this appears to echo the view of *hadīth* scholars of later times'.

¹⁵ Schoeler, 'Mündliche Thora und Hadith: Überlieferung, Schreibverbot, Redaktion', *Der Islam* 66 (1989), 213–51, at 228f: 'Wir hatten eine Abneigung dagegen, das Wissen (sc. die Tradition) niederzuschreiben, bis diese Herrscher uns dazu gezwungen haben. Nun sind wir der Meinung, daß wir es (sc. das Niederschreiben der Tradition) keinem Muslim mehr verwehren sollten.' M.J. Kister calls Sezgin's interpretation of the phrase 'far-fetched'; see Kister, "Lā taqra'ū al-qur'ān 'alā al-muṣhaftiyin wa-lā tāhīlū al-'ilmā 'an al-sahafiyin ...": Some Notes on the Transmission of *Hadīth*', paper presented at the Sixth Colloquium on 'From Jāhiliyya to Islam', JSAI (forthcoming), where the phrase is thoroughly analysed.

this phrase as a reference to writing as opposed to memorizing. Two Umayyad caliphs are mentioned in this context, 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (65-86/685-705) and Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik (105-25/724-43). The traditionist al-Walid b. Muslim implies (although he does not specifically mention the writing down of *hadīth*) that al-Zuhri had already succumbed to Umayyad pressure at the time of 'Abd al-Malik.¹⁶

The evidence concerning Hishām is far stronger. According to one version of the report just quoted, it was Hishām who forced al-Zuhri to abandon his former objection to the writing down of *hadīth*: al-Zuhri then dictated it to Hishām's sons (whose mentor he was). Following this, al-Zuhri allowed ordinary Muslims to write down his *hadīth*.¹⁷ This and other similar records relating to the writing down of *hadīth* should not be read as straightforward historical records. Rather, they are apologetic statements made in connection with the heated debate over the techniques of transmitting *hadīth*. They seek to make value judgements about the practice of writing down *hadīth* by pointing out the alleged circumstances in which the cherished ideal of memorizing was abandoned in favour of writing.

Further important proof is included in a report from Wāqidī < Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh b. Muslim, better known as Ibn Akhī

¹⁶ *Kharaja al-Zuhri min al-Khaḍrā' min 'ind 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān fa-jalasa 'inda dhāka al-'amūd* [al-Walid was of course pointing to a specific column in the mosque of Damascus] *fa-qāla: yā ayyuhā al-nās, innā kunnā qad mana'nā-kum shay'an qad badhalnā-hu li-hā'ulā'i* [i.e., the permission to write down *hadīth*] *fa-ta'ālaw hattā uhadditha-kum* [viz. while you write down my *hadīth*]; Dhahabi, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 243f. On 'Abd al-Malik's purchasing of al-Khaḍrā' from Khālid b. Yazid b. Mu'awiyah see M. 'Abd al-Qādir Khresat, 'al-Qaṭā'i' fī al-'asr al-umawi', *Dirāsāt* ('Ammān) 16,iii (1989), 30-62, at 48 (where the reference given is incorrect).

¹⁷ *Kāna al-Zuhri lā yatrūku abadan yaktubu bayna yaday-hi, fa-akraha-hu Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik fa-amlā 'alā bāni-hi. Fa-lammā kharaja min 'indihi dakhala al-masjid fa-istanada ilā 'amūd min 'umudihi, thumma nādā: yā talabata al-hadīth. Fa-lammā ijtama'u ilayhi qāla: innī kuntu mana'tu-kum amran badhaltu-hu li-amir al-mu'minīn ānifan, halumma fa-uktubū, fa-kataba 'an-hu al-nās min yawma'idhin*; TMD, Zuhri, 91. Kister, "Lā taqra'u al-qur'ān 'alā al-muṣhafīyīn", suggests that 'the *hadīths* which al-Zuhri was bidden to write down for the sons of the Caliph were of an official character. They may have touched upon events which affected people's opinions, such as those connected with the role of some Qurashī enemies of the Prophet who later embraced Islam and became virtuous believers.' Having added further categories of material, Kister concludes: 'These kinds of traditions seem to be the reason why al-Zuhri was vexed and decided to change his manner of transmission, permitting every Muslim to write down *hadīth*'.

al-Zuhrī ('al-Zuhrī's nephew' [mentioned later in this study]).¹⁸ Wāqidī once queried al-Zuhrī's nephew about the circumstances in which he had heard a certain *hadīth* from his uncle. The nephew answered:

I was with him when Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik ordered him to write down [or rather, to dictate] for him his *hadīth*, and he seated before him secretaries (*kuttāb*) to whom al-Zuhrī dictated while they recorded. I used to attend this. Sometimes I had to relieve myself and I would stand up. My uncle used to stop dictating until I returned to my seat.¹⁹

Paradoxically, the detail concerning the nephew's going to the lavatory is the most important component in this report: al-Zuhrī's nephew seeks to establish that he was present throughout the sessions during which his uncle dictated his *hadīth* to Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik's secretaries or, in other words, that he was a trustworthy transmitter of his uncle's *hadīth*. The reliability of the nephew's claims does not concern us here. However, al-Zuhrī's dictation of his *hadīth* to Hishām's secretaries is relevant for us and appears to be authentic, since it forms the background to the account; it is something taken for granted. This is yet another report on this subject, totally independent of the aforementioned one in which we were told of how Hishām forced al-Zuhrī to dictate *hadīth* to his (Hishām's) sons. It is important to emphasize that the secretaries (*kuttāb*) were of course government officials, as is made clear by the frequent references to *sultān* and *wulāt* in the context of al-Zuhrī's dictation (see below).

Reportedly, the envoy who brought al-Zuhrī Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik's request that he dictate (*hadīth*) to him (i.e., to Hishām) was 'Uqayl b. Khālid al-Aylī. Al-Zuhrī complied.²⁰ 'Uqayl, a *mawlā* of the Umayyads, more precisely of the family (*āl*) of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, is known to have worked for the Umayyad state. Al-Mājishūn

¹⁸ For an entry on Ibn Akhī al-Zuhrī see *TMD, Mukht.*, XXII, 328f. Muham-mad's father, who was al-Zuhrī's elder brother, was a *hadīth* transmitter; *Tahdh.*, VI, 29.

¹⁹ Ibn Sa'd, *Qism mutammim*, 453 (*kuntu ma'a-hu haythu amara-hu Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik an yaktuba la-hu hadītha-hu wa-ajlasa la-hu kuttāban yumlī 'alay-him al-Zuhrī wa-yaktribūna. Fa-kuntu abduru dhālikā fa-rubbamā 'aradat li al-hājah fa-aqūmu fi-hā fa-yumsiku 'ammi 'an al-imlā' hattā a'ūda ilā makān-i*). See the same report in *TMD, MS*, XV, 559f; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, XXV, 558.

²⁰ Ibn Khalfūn al-Andalusī, *Asmā' shuyūkh al-imām Mālik b. Anas*, ed. M.Z.M. 'Azb (Cairo n.d.), 110: *wa-yuqālu inna-hu kāna rasūla Hishām ilā al-Zuhrī fi an yumlīya 'alay-hi, fa-amlā 'alay-hi al-Zuhrī*.

(= Ya‘qūb b. Abī Salamah) said, ‘Uqayl was a *shurṭī* here (*‘inda-nā*) in Medina, and he died in Egypt in 141’ (758-9).²¹

One of Hishām’s secretaries who wrote down al-Zuhri’s *hadīth* can probably be identified as Shu‘ayb b. Abī Ḥamzahb. Dīnār al-Himṣī (d. 162/779), a *mawlā* of the Banū Umayyah. He was a secretary of Hishām in al-Ruṣāfah, where he received *hadīth* from al-Zuhri. He also accompanied al-Zuhri on a pilgrimage to Mecca.²² Yahyā b. Ma‘īn reported that Shu‘ayb was one of the secretaries (*kuttāb*) who recorded al-Zuhri’s *hadīth*: ‘Shu‘ayb b. Abī Ḥamza wrote down al-Zuhri’s *hadīth* when he dictated it for the rulers, being a secretary’ (*kataba ‘an al-Zuhri imlā‘an li-l-sultān, kāna kātibān*).²³ There are indications that Shu‘ayb was (at some point) the secretary (*kātib*) of al-Zuhri himself.²⁴ This *kātib*-office may have been connected to al-Zuhri’s role as *qādī* (on which see below).

Shu‘ayb, then, is a specific example of an official who wrote down al-Zuhri’s *hadīth* in al-Ruṣāfah, on Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik’s orders. In other words, the general statement about the secretaries who were ordered to write down al-Zuhri’s *hadīth* matches the evidence about one of them. This confirms the involvement of the Umayyad state in recording al-Zuhri’s *hadīth*.²⁵

We know of yet another person who participated in ‘al-Zuhri’s dictation (*imlā‘*) for the rulers’: Yūnus b. Yazīd (al-Aylī, a *mawlā* of

²¹ Dhahabī, *Nubalā‘*, VI, 302. This remark has more to do with Uqayl’s reputation as a *hadīth* transmitter than with a genuine interest in his biography.

²² TMD, MS, VIII, 76. Shu‘ayb was the *mawlā* of Ziyād (viz. Ziyād b. Abīhi); TMD, MS, VIII, 76:-1. He was the official in charge of Hishām’s *nafaqāt* (*wa-kāna min kuttāb Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik ‘alā nafaqāti-hi wa-kāna al-Zuhri mā a-hum bi-al-Ruṣāfah*); TMD, MS, VIII, 80:25; Abū Zur‘a, *Ta’rīkh*, I, 433; II, 715.

²³ TMD, MS, VIII, 78:13. Dhahabī explains (*Nubalā‘*, VII, 188) that by *sultān*, Yahyā means Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik. Cf. the slightly different wording of Yahyā in TMD, MS, VIII, 79:4 (*shahida al-imlā min al-Zuhri li-al-sultān*); also 80:10 (*wa-kāna samā‘u-hu min al-Zuhri ma‘ al-wulāh imlā min al-Zuhri ‘alay-him*). See also Abū Ḥātim’s remark (79:7): *haḍara Shu‘ayb b. Abī Ḥamzah al-Ruṣāfah baythu amlā al-Zuhri, fa-samā‘u-hu min al-Zuhri imlā*. Another expert remarks (79:18): *wa-kāna samā‘u-hu min al-Zuhri ma‘a al-sultān*. ‘Ali b. al-Madīnī (79:21) adds another aspect when he refers to the form of Shu‘ayb’s ‘notebooks’: *kutub Shu‘ayb b. Abī Ḥamzah tushbihu kutub al-dīwān*, which Ibn ‘Asākir interprets as an expression of disapproval (*yuridu ‘Ali b. al-Madīnī bi-dhālikā mā hākā-hu Yahyā b. Ma‘īn anna-hu sami‘a-hu ma‘a al-wulāh*). For a positive appraisal of Shu‘ayb’s transmission from al-Zuhri see Yahyā b. Ma‘īn, *Ma‘rifat al-rijāl*, I, 120f.

²⁴ Yahyā b. Ma‘īn, quoted in *Tahdhīb*, IV, 351, says: *Shu‘ayb min athbat al-nās fi al-Zūhrī, kāna kātibān la-hu*. Another expert, al-Khalilī, quoted in *Tahdhīb*, IV, 352, says: *kāna kātib al-Zuhri*.

²⁵ Yahyā b. Ma‘īn is also quoted in *Su‘ālāt Ibn al-Junayd*, 394.

Mu‘āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān). Yahyā b. Ma‘in referred in this context both to him and to the abovementioned Shu‘ayb.²⁶

It is not clear to what extent our *hadīth* collections reflect the government’s significant role in the earliest stages of the writing down of *hadīth* but at any rate it is a major factor to be reckoned with when studying the emergence of early Islamic literature.

The second point of detail on which Goldziher is said to have misunderstood the Arabic text concerns his interpretation of the story about the Umayyad prince who, in Goldziher’s words, ‘came to al-Zuhri with a notebook he had written, and asked his permission to spread the sayings contained in it as *hadīths* communicated by al-Zuhri’. The exact wording is crucial for our discussion: ‘Abd al-Razzāq < Ma‘mar: *ra‘aytu rajulan min Banī Umayyah yuqālu la-hu Ibrāhīm b. al-Walīd jā‘a ilā al-Zuhri bi-kitāb fa-‘arada-hu ‘alay-hi thumma qāla: uyhaddithu bi-hādhā ‘an-ka yā Abā Bakr? qāla: la-‘amrī fa-man yuhaddithu-kumūhu ghayrī?* In the source just quoted this is immediately followed by a variant version in which the passage *jā‘a ilā al-Zuhri bi-kitāb fa-‘arada-hu ‘alay-hi*, is replaced by *wa-‘arada ‘alay-hi kitāban min ‘ilmī-hi*.²⁷ This variant is important because of its explicit statement, perhaps overlooked by Goldziher, that the notebook included, or was supposed to have included, al-Zuhri’s own *‘ilm*.²⁸ Ibn Sa‘d, in a volume recently published,²⁹ has a less precise version: *wa-‘arada ‘alay-hi kitāban min ‘ilm*, instead of ... *min ‘ilmī-hi*. The editor of this volume of Ibn Sa‘d, Ziyād Muḥammad Manṣūr, challenges Goldziher’s interpretation. He criticizes Goldziher for overlooking the reference to the technique of *hadīth* transmission called *‘ard* which many, including al-Zuhri, considered to be legitimate.³⁰ According to Manṣūr, al-Zuhri’s words *fa-man yuhaddithu-kumūhu ghayrī* mean ‘Who but me knows these *hadīths* and can transmit them to you and give you permission to transmit them further?’ Manṣūr has in mind the ninety *hadīths* transmitted only by al-Zuhri and no one else (*ay man ya‘lamu bi-hādhīhi al-ahādīth ghayrī hattā yuhadditha-kum wa-yujiza-kum bi-hā, idh thabata anna al-Zuhri infarada bi-tis‘īna hadīthan lā yarwī-hā ghayru-hu*). This,

²⁶ *Su‘ālāt Ibn al-Junayd*, 307 (Yūnus b. Yazīd shahida al-imlā‘a min al-Zuhri li-sultān wa-Shu‘ayb b. Abī Ḥamza shahida al-imlā‘a). On Yūnus see below, n. 105/05. (The above-mentioned ‘Uqayl b. Khālid was also a *mawlā* of the Umayyads who lived in Aylah.)

²⁷ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 266.

²⁸ Goldziher certainly knew the term *‘ard*; see *Muslim Studies*, II, 205n.

²⁹ *Qism mutammim*, 172.

³⁰ Cf. Juynboll, *Authenticity*, 112.

Manṣūr adds, is the meaning of the text, not what the Jew Goldziher claimed (*lā kamā za‘ama al-yahūdī Goldziher*), namely that Ibrāhīm wrote a *shāfiyah*, brought it to al-Zuhri, and asked for his permission to disseminate the *hadīths* included in it as though he had heard them from him. Manṣūr concludes by saying that the text explicitly states that Ibrāhīm presented the *hadīths* to his teacher al-Zuhri using the technique known as ‘ard (*‘arada ‘alā shaykhī-hi ‘ardan*), which many *Muḥaddithūn* consider to be on the same level as *samā‘*.³¹

While Manṣūr’s criticism about the technical term ‘ard may be justified to some extent, on the whole he misinterprets the report while Goldziher understands it correctly. It is true that the *kitāb min ‘ilmī-hi*, which the prince ‘presented’ to al-Zuhri (*‘arada*)³² was supposed to include al-Zuhri’s own *ilm* which he transmitted or dictated to the prince, who in his turn wrote it down in a notebook. In other words, the wording does not suggest that the *hadīths* in the notebook were invented by the prince. But this point of detail does not affect Goldziher’s overall interpretation of the text. The crux of the matter is not al-Zuhri’s approval of the ‘ard technique but his allegedly sloppy and irresponsible application of it. Manṣūr is wrong in assuming that the text does not indicate reprehensible conduct on al-Zuhri’s part in connection with the transmission of *hadīth*. Al-Zuhri’s alleged answer to the prince, ‘Who else could have told you the *hadīth*? is adduced by al-Zuhri’s student, Ma‘mar b. Rāshid, in order to convey to us that al-Zuhri had no intention of checking the contents of the *kitāb* presented to him for inspection. (This is not the only criticism made by Ma‘mar about al-Zuhri’s practices in transmitting *hadīth*. Ma‘mar accused al-Zuhri of employing the same method as al-Ḥakam b. ‘Utaybah: both used to ascribe the *hadīth* of one informant to another.³³)

³¹ Ibn Sa‘d, *Qism mutammim*, 172n. Cf. E. Kohlberg, ‘al-Uṣūl al-Arba‘umi‘a’, *JSAJ* 10 (1987), 128–66, at 139; reprinted in *idem*, *Belief and Law in Imāmi Shī‘ism* (London 1991), no. VII.

³² Goldziher rendered this ‘a notebook he had written’; the German original has here: ‘mit einem fertigen Hefte kam’.

³³ TMD, Zuhri, 129 (*kāna al-Zuhri fī ashābihi mitih al-Ḥakam b. ‘Utaybah fī ashābihi, yanqulu ḥadītha ba‘di-him ilā ba‘d*). A variant version (*loc. cit.*) has: *kāna... yarwī ‘an ‘Urwa wa-Sālim al-shay‘a ka-dhālikā*. The *naql* of which Wāqidī was accused is the same as the one ascribed to al-Zuhri; Dhahabī, *Nubalā‘*, IX, 463 (*kāna yanqulu al-ḥadīha*). Interestingly, as a specific example of Wāqidī’s practice of *naql*, *hadīths* which he claimed to have been from al-Zuhri are mentioned (*rawā... ahādītha ‘an al-Zuhri laysat min ḥadībihi*). It is perhaps no accident that al-Ḥakam b. ‘Utaybah al-‘Ijli was a member of the Umayyad administration at the time of Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik, more precisely he was *qādī* in Kufa during the governorship of Khālid al-Qasrī; Wakī‘, III, 22f.

That a flaw in al-Zuhri's practice as *hadīth* transmitter is meant here can be shown by another, similar, report. It records the criticism of the great-great-grandson of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, 'Ubaydallāh b. 'Umar (147/764), who, like Ma'mar b. Rāshid, was al-Zuhri's student.³⁴

I have seen Ibn Shihāb when one of his 'books' [*kitāb min kutubi-hi*, i.e., a written collection or notebook including *hadīths* transmitted from al-Zuhri] was brought to him. And he was asked [by his student who brought him the 'book']: 'O Abū Bakr, this is your book and your *hadīth*, shall we transmit it on your authority?' He said: 'Yes.' He did not read it out and it was not read out to him.³⁵

The same criticism was levelled at al-Zuhri in connection with the Umayyad prince. J. Horovitz interprets 'Ubaydallāh's words correctly when he says that al-Zuhri 'was blamed for having allowed a volume containing Hadīth reported by him, which was submitted to him for approval, to be passed on to posterity, without first looking through it'. Horovitz continues, plausibly linking this to the aforementioned story of the Umayyad prince: 'According to one version it was Ibrāhīm ibn Al-Walīd to whom he gave such a permission.' Horovitz adds that 'it was possible in that way to adduce in the name of Al-Zuhri reports which he himself never knew'.³⁶

Two other versions of the above-mentioned report about 'Ubaydallāh provide further elucidation: 'Ubaydallāh testifies that it was he himself, not an anonymous person, who brought a 'book' to al-Zuhri and received immediate permission to transmit it. In one version al-Zuhri (briefly) looked at the 'book' (*dafa'tu ilā bni Shihāb kitāban naṣara fi-hi fa-qāla: rwi-hi 'anni*). The other version emphasizes that al-Zuhri did not even look at the book: it was given to him folded.³⁷

³⁴ GAS, I, 89.

³⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *Qism mutammim*, 173. In Duri, *Rise*, 120, quoting Dhahabi, *Tarājim rijāl*, 69, the translation is wrong: "Ubayd Allāh ibn 'Umar reported, "I used to see al-Zuhri give [someone] a book which he neither recited [to the students] nor had recited to him [by the students]." In 'Ubaydallāh's report, al-Zuhri receives a notebook (*yu'rā al-kitābah*, i.e., for inspection) and does not give it. In Duri, *Rise*, n. 296, instead of: al-Khaṭib al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, I, 266, read: al-Khaṭib al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 266. Cf. Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, 155, n. 57 (who, I believe, provides the wrong context).

³⁶ Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 48. Horovitz's concluding sentence reveals an important area of disagreement between him and Goldziher: 'That he invented Hadīth in order to promote the interests of the Umayyads is, however, unacceptable.'

³⁷ TMD, *Zuhri*, 151 (ataytu al-Zuhri bi-kitāb mudraj fa-qalutu: arwi hādhā 'an-ka? qāla: na'am). See also *al-Ma'rīfah wa-al-ta'rikh*, II, 823 (where the same 'Ubaydallāh b. 'Umar says: *ashhadu 'alā Ibn Shihāb anna-hu kāna yu'tā bi-al-kitāb min*

As we have seen, it was Ma'mar b. Rāshid who criticized al-Zuhri for his conduct with the Umayyad prince, Ibrāhīm b. al-Walid. It is important to note that according to Ma'mar's testimony, the knowledge (or *hadīth*) which he himself received from al-Zuhri was transmitted to him impeccably, namely he read it out to al-Zuhri, who in turn authorized him to transmit it on his (al-Zuhri's) authority (viz. he considered the student's reading to the teacher to be on a par with the teacher's reading to the student).³⁸

So much for the allegations made concerning Goldziher's command of Arabic with regard to al-Zuhri's association with the Umayyads. Far subtler is the revision of the evidence with the aim of blunting its message. This is done by focusing on some marginal pieces of evidence at the expense of the central ones. As we shall soon find out, al-Zuhri's contemporaries (and later medieval Muslim scholars as well) were more critical of his relations with the Umayyads than some of our contemporaries.³⁹

M.M. Azami writes about al-Zuhri, quite oblivious to the aversion of the pious to entering government service, so intelligently analysed by Goldziher a century ago:⁴⁰

The gravest charge against him is his co-operation with the ruling family. There were many great scholars who co-operated with the government and held offices. ... Therefore, it cannot be a charge against someone that he accepted an office in the government, provided that his conduct was right.⁴¹

The Indian scholar N.A. Faruqi writes about al-Zuhri: 'He was closely associated with the Umayyad court. But ... in matters of

kutubi-hi fa-yatasaffabu-hu wa-yanzuru fi-hi thumma yaqūlu: hādhā ḥadīthī a'rifu hu khudh-hu minnī; Yahyā b. Ma'in, *Ma'rifat al-rijāl*, II, 149 ('Ubaydallāh: kuntu arā al-Zuhri yu'tā bi-al-daf'āt mā qara'a-hu wa-lā 'uriḍa 'alay-hi, fa-yuqālu la-hu: narwī hādhā 'an-ka? fa-yaqūlu: nā'am).

³⁸ *Al-Ma'rifah wa-al-ta'rikh*, II, 827 (*qara'tu al-'ilm 'alā al-Zuhri fa-lammā faragħtu min-hu qultu: uħaddithu bi-hādhā 'an-ka? qāla: wa-man haddatha-ka bi-hādhā ghayrī*).

³⁹ See also Kister, 'The *Sīrah* Literature', in A.F.L. Beeston et al. (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period* (Cambridge 1983; = CHALUP), 352-67, at 365: 'The favours bestowed on al-Zuhri by the Umayyads and the close relations between him and the rulers aroused the suspicions of independent *hadīth* scholars as to his integrity.'

⁴⁰ *Muslim Studies*, II, 47f. For rich documentation, accompanied by a balanced analysis, of the two types of religious scholars, namely those who were willing to co-operate with the rulers and take up government offices, and those who opposed it, see 'Athāmina, 'The 'Ulamā' in the Opposition'.

⁴¹ M.M. Azami, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* (Indianapolis 1978), 288.

historical and religious significance, he observed accuracy and impartiality and did not yield to timely political pressures.⁴²

'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī, who has written extensively on al-Zuhri, makes a remarkable effort at establishing al-Zuhri's independence of the Umayyad court. He says that 'there is an account reported from al-Zuhri which indicates that he was critical of 'Abd al-Malik during the period of the struggle with Ibn al-Zubayr'.⁴³ The same line of thought was adopted, probably independently, by Azami (who does not list Dūrī in his bibliography): 'Undoubtedly he was attached to the Caliph's court from the time of 'Abd al-Malik to Hishām's. It is also true that he had been heavily in debt several times, that was paid off by Caliphs, yet his relation with the Caliphs was not always smooth.' Azami also argues that 'it would be unfair to history, to deduce from al-Zuhri's relation with the Umayyad dynasty, that he was a tool in their hands, and that they exploited his name, fame and knowledge to circulate false traditions in their favour'.⁴⁴

Returning to Dūrī, we notice an attempt to distance al-Zuhri from the court:

Though he did make occasional and intermittent visits to the Umayyad court, al-Zuhri's studies probably kept him in Medina most of the time. Later he moved to Adāma, in southern Palestine near the boundary of the Hijaz, and from there made trips to the Hijaz and to Damascus (the Umayyad court) 'for academic purposes' (*li-'ilmī-hi*).⁴⁵

However, a traditionist from al-Ruṣāfah reports that al-Zuhri stayed in al-Ruṣāfah throughout the caliphate of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik

⁴² N.A. Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography* (Delhi 1979), 237, n. 1.

⁴³ Dūrī, *Rise*, 118; Dūrī, 'al-Zuhri', *BSOAS* 19 (1957), 1-12, at 11, citing Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, XI, 163, read probably: 167. The dating of the utterance attributed to al-Zuhri to the struggle with Ibn al-Zubayr does not belong to the text but to Dūrī's interpretation; in fact, the wording seems to suggest that it was made *after* the time of 'Abd al-Malik. Cf. *TMD, Mukht.*, XV, 224. According to Dūrī (*Rise*, 117n), Goldziher's remarks concerning al-Zuhri's relations with the Umayyads 'are not very critical'; see also Dūrī, 'al-Zuhri', 10n (they are 'hardly critical').

⁴⁴ Azami, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature*, 288f.

⁴⁵ Dūrī, *Rise*, 118f. Cf. Dūrī, 'al-Zuhri', 11 (where *li-'ilmī-hi* is rendered 'as a scholar'). Dūrī suggests that it is more likely that al-Zuhri settled in Damascus at the time of Yazid II and Hishām (but there is evidence that he had settled there already at the time of 'Abd al-Malik; see Section 2 below). The meaning of *li-'ilmī-hi* is obscure to me. The wording of the passage in question is: *wafada al-Zuhri 'alā 'Abd l-Malik wa-istawṣana al-Shām wa-kāna yataraddadu ilā al-Hijāz wa-yabuju wa-yafiqu* [read: *wa-yafidu*] *'alā Bani Umayyah li-'ilmī-hi*; Dhahabi, *Tarājim rijāl*, 70. Concerning Adāma, note that it was only when al-Zuhri grew old that he retired to his estate there; see below, n. 160.

(*khilāfata Hishām kulla-hā*), namely for nineteen years and eight months.⁴⁶ Dūrī does mention that al-Zuhri officiated as *qādī* for Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik and was the tutor of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik's children,⁴⁷ but he then quotes in detail a dispute between al-Zuhri and Hishām:

... from a fierce argument which transpired between him and Hishām, we can see that al-Zuhri had not fallen under the influence of the Umayyads. Hishām asked him who was meant in the Qur'ānic verse, 'whichever of them takes upon himself the greater part of it'⁴⁸ and al-Zuhri replied, 'It was 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy'. 'You lie', Hishām cried, 'It was 'Alī!'. Al-Zuhri replied, 'I lie?! May you have no father! By God, even if a herald were to cry out from heaven that God had permitted lying, still I would not lie'. Such was al-Zuhri the scholar.⁴⁹

This revision of al-Zuhri's links with the Umayyads lacks a sense of proportion. Even if we accept as historical al-Zuhri's critical comment concerning 'Abd al-Malik and his reported dispute with Hishām, they do not establish him as an independent intellectual. Al-Zuhri himself appears to have taken pride in his long relationship with the Umayyads, or at least this is what we read in an allegedly autobiographical tradition going back to him.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ *Al-Ma'rifah wa-al-ta'rikh*, I, 636. On this Ruṣāfi, Hajjāj b. Abī Manī', see *Tahdhīb*, II, 207f; Ibn Sa'd, VII, 474. Another Ruṣāfi testifies that he stayed with al-Zuhri in al-Ruṣāfah for ten years; Yāqūt, the end of s.v. Ruṣāfat al-Shām; Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 432; cf. *Tahdhīb*, s.v. Muḥammad b. al-Walid, IX, 502f. When Mālik b. Anas criticized him for leaving Medina after having exhausted its knowledge (*talabta al-'ilm hattā idhā kunta wi'a'an min aw'iyyati-hi tarakta al-Madīnah wa-kharajta 'an-hā*), al-Zuhri answered: *innamā kuntu anzilu al-Madīnah wa-al-nās idh dhāka nās; al-Ma'rifah wa-al-ta'rikh*, I, 621.

⁴⁷ See also N. Abbott, 'Collection and Transmission of *Hadīth*', in *CHALUP*, 289-98, at 294. In 123/741, shortly before his death, al-Zuhri made the pilgrimage with Hishām's son Yazid; Ibn Sa'd, *Qism mutammim*, 165. This confirms the report that going to the pilgrimage with Hishām's children was part of al-Zuhri's role as their mentor and that he did not depart from them until his death; Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 233 (*wa-hajja Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik sanata sitt wa-mi'a wa-ma'a-hu al-Zuhri, haṣara-hu ma'a wuldi-hi yufaqqihu-hum wa-yu'allimu-hum wa-yahuju ma'a-hum fa-lam yufāriq-hum hattā māta'*).

⁴⁸ Qur'ān 24:11.

⁴⁹ Dūrī, *Rise*, 118, 119. See Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 40f: 'The intercourse between the Khalīfah and his learned court-theologian, as Al-Zuhri has been called, did not always run so smoothly.' It was Goldziher who called al-Zuhri 'court-theologian', and Horovitz meant this as a mild criticism. Cf. Kister, 'The *Sīrah* Literature', 364 (the context of the story is 'the attempts made by the Umayyads and their governors to denigrate 'Alī in the *Sīrah* ... Al-Zuhri courageously refuses to transfer the guilt of slandering of 'Ā'ishah from 'Abdullāh b. Ubayy to 'Alī).

⁵⁰ Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, V, 331 (...*wa-tuwuffiya 'Abd al-Malik fa-lazimtu bna-hu al-Walid, thumma Sulaymān, thumma 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, thumma Yazid ... thumma lazimtu Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik ...*).

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON IBN SHIHĀB AL-ZUHRĪ

Al-Zuhri's contemporaries and later medieval Muslim scholars had another perception altogether of al-Zuhri's links with the Umayyads. For example, Makhlūf said, 'What a [great] man he could have been, had he not ruined himself by associating with the kings.'⁵¹ Yahyā b. Ma'īn (233/847) said of al-Zuhri *kāna sultāniyyan*.⁵² Because of this, Yahyā preferred the transmission of another scholar to al-Zuhri's. The famous Mu'tazilite, 'Amr b. 'Ubayd (d. 144/761),⁵³ once reprimanded a man whom he had seen in al-Zuhri's company, asking, 'What business do you have with the napkin of the rulers?'⁵⁴ The abovementioned Yahyā b. Ma'īn would not allow a comparison between al-Zuhri and al-A'mash. The former considered the 'ard and *ijāza* techniques to be lawful and served in the administration of the Umayyads (*wa-kāna ya'malu li-Banī Umayyah*), whereas the latter (who was obviously opposed to these techniques) was poor and patient and avoided the rulers.⁵⁵

The ascetic Abū Hāzim Salamah b. Dīnār is reported to have admonished an Umayyad governor in the presence of al-Zuhri and other scholars, saying, 'The best of rulers (*umārā'*) is one who loves the scholars ('ulamā'), and the worst of scholars is one who loves the rulers.'⁵⁶

⁵¹ Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, V, 339 (*ayyu rajul huwa lawlā annahū afsada nafsa-hu bi-suhbat al-mulūk*). This passage was quoted by Horovitz, *EI*¹, s.v. al-Zuhri; Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 45.

⁵² *Su'ālāt Ibn al-Junayd*, 355.

⁵³ GAS, I, 597; *EI*², s.v. (W.M. Watt).

⁵⁴ TMD, *Zuhri*, 162 (*mā laka wa-li-mindil al-umarā'*).

⁵⁵ Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *Ma'rifat 'ulūm al-hadīth*, ed. M. Husayn (Hyderabad; reprint Medina 1397/1977), 54. See also Sufyān b. 'Uyayna's comment concerning the reliability of Ibn Jurayj's transmission from al-Zuhri: *kāna bn Jurayj yaj'u ilā al-Zuhri wa-mā'a-hu kitāb fa-yaqūlu: arwī hādhā 'an-ka?*; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Ishrāf fi manāzil al-ashrāf*, ed. N. 'A. Khalaf (Riyadh 1411/1990), 198. Al-Zuhri's answer, needless to say, was positive.

⁵⁶ Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, VI, 101; TMD, *Mukht.*, X, 67. Having been informed by Salamah about the difference between the 'ulamā' of yore and the contemporary 'ulamā', the caliph Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik allegedly promised to reduce his contacts with al-Zuhri, who was present at the meeting, to the minimum; TMD, *Mukht.*, X, 68f (*wa-la-azhadanna fi al-Zuhri min ba'd al-yawm*). See also Kister, 'The *Sirah* Literature', 365 (Salamah wrote to al-Zuhri that the oppressive rulers 'have turned him into the axle of the wheel of their falsehood and into a bridge for their deceit and error'); 'The 'Ulāmā' in the Opposition', 159 quotes another passage from the same letter; see also 163. The statement that Salamah officiated as *qādi* in Medina (see GAS, I, 634) is based on a corrupt text: instead of: *kāna yaqđi fi masjid al-Madīnah* (*Tahdh.*, IV, 144), and *wa-kāna yaqđi bayn al-fajr wa-al-'asr fi masjid al-Madīnah* (*TMD*, *Tahdh.*, VI, 219), read: *wa-kāna yaqūṣu ba'd al-fajr wa-ba'd al-'asr fi masjid al-Madīnah*; Ibn Sa'd, *Qism mutammim*, 332; Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, VI, 101; TMD, *Mukht.*, X, 66.

We clearly have two stereotyped figures here: on the one hand, the rich scholar who associates with the rulers without any scruples, and on the other, the ascetic or *zāhid*. Islamic literature is fond of such contrasts, but the literary stereotypes do not lack a factual basis. Even Mālik b. Anas is reported to have admonished al-Zuhri for using his knowledge in order to achieve worldly gains.⁵⁷

Of course, the criticism directed at al-Zuhri did not prevent Mālik or the other critics from transmitting his *hadīth*: al-Zuhri's imprint on the nascent Islamic literature was so formidable, that he could not be ignored. Another traditionist spoke of al-Zuhri admiringly, without, however, omitting to mention his association with the government.⁵⁸ Inevitably, this approach finally prevailed: al-Zuhri's enormous collection of *hadīth* was indispensable.⁵⁹ The same dilemma can be witnessed in the case of Wāqidī, whose large collection of material had to be used in spite of the doubts expressed about his indiscriminate techniques.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ TMD, Zuhri, 154: *amā balaghā-ka anna rāsūl Allāhi (s) qāla: man yaṭaba shay'an min hādhā al-'ilm alladhi yurādu bi-hi wa-jih Allāh* [the words yaṭlubu bi-hi here are superfluous] *shay'an min gharad al-dunyā* [read: *min 'arad al-dunyā*, 'the frail goods of the present world'] *dakhala al-nāra*? A fuller version of this anecdote (Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, 169f) includes the background to this critical comment: 'Mālik b. Anas... once visited al-Zuhri with a couple of other people to hear traditions with him. Al-Zuhri appeared hesitant until a eunuch sent by the Umayyads came to him and likewise asked him about traditions. Then al-Zuhri opened up.' Juynboll remarks correctly that the report 'points to the controversial issue about al-Zuhri having, or not having, been under Umayyad pressure regarding the promulgation of *hadīths*, and that this was taken as a blemish on his character'.

⁵⁸ TMD, Zuhri, 161 (*law kuntu kātibān al-hadīth 'an ahad kuntu kātiba-hu 'an al-Zuhri, min [sic] rajul ahyā 'ilm tilka al-bald, min rajul yashabu al-sultān*).

⁵⁹ 'Athāmina, 'The 'Ulamā' in the Opposition', 166, writes: 'The excommunication of collaborators centred mainly upon the academic field; *muḥaddithūn* banned the traditions of this group and refrained from attending their study circles. Among the most prominent of those banned was Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri, who was so severely banned that his study group disintegrated completely.' But 'Athāmina reads too much into his evidence, which consists of Ma'mar b. Rāshid's testimony that when he came to al-Zuhri in al-Ruṣāfah, nobody used to ask the latter about the *hadīth*, so he would bestow (his knowledge) on him (i.e. abundantly) (*fa-lam yakun ahad yas'alu-hu 'an al-hadīth, fa-kāna yulqī 'alay-ya*); Abū Nu'aym, *Hilyat al-awliya'* (Cairo n.d.; reprint Beirut 1387/1967), III, 363. Ma'mar's statement should not be taken at face value (cf. the testimony of a traditionist quoted in Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 432: *kuntu aqra'u bi-al-Ruṣāfah 'alā Ibn Shihāb* etc.). Ma'mar merely states that as long as he stayed in al-Ruṣāfah, he had al-Zuhri all for himself.

⁶⁰ This is clearly reflected in Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, IX, 454f (*wa-jama'a fa-aw'ā wa-khalāta al-ghathth bi-al-samīn wa-al-kharazah bi-al-durr al-thamin fa-ittarahū-hu* ['they cast him away'] *li-dhālikā, wa-ma'a hādhā fa-lā yustaghnā 'an-hu fi al-maghāzi wa-ayyām al-sahābah wa-akhbāri-him*). See also Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, IX, 469 (*wa-qad*

Al-Zuhri's problematic link with the court also colours remarks made about him by two prominent *hadīth* scholars, 'Amr b. Dīnār and al-Awzā'i. 'Amr b. Dīnār said, 'I have not seen a man more skilled in tracing up [or ascribing, or attributing] a tradition to its author than al-Zuhri, and I have never seen anyone who had less respect for the *dirham* than him. The *dirhams* were in his eyes nothing more than dung.'⁶¹ Goldziher adduces the second part of 'Amr's utterance as evidence of al-Zuhri's selflessness.⁶² But while this conclusion may well have been correct,⁶³ it is the first part of the utterance which provides its context. 'Amr is aware of the fact that al-Zuhri could be accused of receiving bribes from the Umayyads in return for forging *hadīth*. He therefore states that this was impossible. A man with such little respect for money simply could not

taqarrara anna al-Wāqidiyya da'if yubtāju ilay-hi fi al-ghazawāt wa-al-ta'rīkh... ammā fi al-farā'id ['concerning the things made obligatory on a person by God', viz. the religious law] *fa-lā yanbaghi an yudhkara*). It should be noted that Wāqīdī, exactly like al-Zuhri one century earlier, was in financial hardship when he came to the capital Baghdad (*qadima Baghdād fi dayn labiqā-hu*) and, again like al-Zuhri, Wāqīdī officiated as *qādī* (under al-Mā'mūn); Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, IX, 457. Note Wāqīdī's autobiographical report, comparable to al-Zuhri's autobiographical report, about his arrival in Baghdad and his first meeting with the *wazīr* Yāhūya b. Khālid al-Barmakī; Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, IX, 459.

At some stage, probably late in his life, al-Zuhri abandoned *hadīth* altogether, possibly motivated by the criticism directed at him. *TMD*, *Zuhri*, 156, records a story of al-Hasan b. 'Umāra, who was the *qādī* of Baghdad at the time of al-Manṣūr, in which this detail appears as a matter of common knowledge: *ataytu al-Zuhri ba'da an taraka al-hadīth* etc. On al-Hasan see *Tahdhīb*, II, 304f.

⁶¹ *TMD*, *Zuhri*, 96 (*mā ra'aytu ahadan anāṣa li-l-hadīth min al-Zuhri, wa-mā ra'aytu ahadan al-dirham ahwanu 'alay-hi min-hu, in kānat al-darāhim 'inda-hu illā bi-manzilat al-ba'r*). As is usually the case with Ibn 'Asākir's *Ta'rīkh Dimashq*, we find several other versions of this saying. See also E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (London 1863-93), s.vv. *naṣṣa*, *anaṣṣu*: *naṣṣa al-hadīth* means 'he traced up, or ascribed, or attributed, the tradition to the author thereof, resting it on his authority, by mentioning him, or mentioning, uninterruptedly, in ascending order, the persons by whom it had been handed down, up to the author'. Cf. *TMD*, *Zuhri*, 98 ('Amr b. Dīnār: ... *fa-lam ara ahadanasnada li-l-hadīth min al-Zuhri*).

⁶² *Muslim Studies*, II, 46n, quoting al-Tirmidhī, *Šāhīb* (Būlāq 1292/1875), I, 104. Cf. Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 40 (where the name of 'Amr b. Dīnār is garbled).

⁶³ See the version of this utterance in Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā*, VII, 245: *mā ra'aytu anāṣa li-l-hadīth min Ibn Shihāb wa-lā ra'aytu ajwada min-hu, mā kānat al-danānīr wa-al-darāhim 'inda-hu illā bi-manzilat al-ba'r*. But cf. *TMD*, *Zuhri*, 97: *mā ra'aytu shaykhan anāṣa li-l-hadīth al-jayyid min hādhā al-shaykh*. Also Ibn Ḥanbal's utterance, quoted in Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, *Sharḥ 'ilal al-Tirmidhī*, ed. S. al-Sāmarrā'i (reprint Beirut 1405/1985), 118: *al-Zuhri ahsanu hadīthan wa-ajwadu al-nāsi isnādan*.

have been bribed. In other words, there was no motive, therefore there was no crime.

As for Awzā'i, in his appraisal of al-Zuhri he strikes a respectable compromise: 'Al-Zuhri never endeavoured to conciliate a ruler whom he visited [or 'he never acted with dishonesty towards him'], and of the *tābi'ūn* who lived to the caliphate of Hishām none was a greater expert on *fiqh*'.⁶⁴ In other words, al-Zuhri was indeed a frequent visitor at court, but he did not hesitate in expressing his opinion even if it was unpopular, and did not lose his integrity. Awzā'i's statement is not implausible: after decades of close association with the Umayyad court, al-Zuhri may well have enjoyed freedom of speech. In any case, Awzā'i's sober approach to al-Zuhri, motivated by both respect for his scholarly achievement and the indispensability of his work, is far more plausible than the attempt to 'distance' al-Zuhri from the Umayyads.⁶⁵

The worst accusation which the pious could make against al-Zuhri concerned his service in the state administration. Al-Zuhri's work as *qādī* for Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik was mentioned by Goldziher.⁶⁶ Horovitz pointed out that al-Zuhri served as *qādī* under 'Umar II as well.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ TMD, *Zuhri*, 161: *mā adhna Ibn Shihāb qatū li-malik dakhala 'alay-hi wa-lā adrakat khilāfat Hishām aħħadan min al-tābi'īn afqaha min-hu*; var.: *mā dāħħana Ibn Shihāb malikan min al-mulūk qatū idħħa dakhala 'alay-hi*; Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā*, VII, 243. Incidentally, 'Abd al-Malik is said to have referred to Mu'āwiya as *al-khalifa al-mudāħiħin*; Khalīfa, *Tarikh*, I, 349.

⁶⁵ Cf. N. Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri, I: Historical Texts* (Chicago 1957), 16, who refers to 'Abd al-Malik's 'patronage of the traditionist-historians 'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr and al-Zuhri'. Also Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri, II: Qur'anic Commentary and Tradition* (Chicago 1967), 22, where she speaks of al-Zuhri's 'more than forty years of service under Umayyad patronage'; 23: al-Zuhri was 'well established' in Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik's court; 33: 'al-Zuhri's new patrons, first Yazid II (101-5/720-24) and then Hishām (105-25/724-42), made special demands on his time and knowledge'. However, Abbott emphasizes in a footnote: 'The hasty assumption by Sprenger and Muir, followed by Guillaume ... and others, that Umayyad pressure forced al-Zuhri to large-scale forgery of *hadith* should be definitely and finally abandoned'; Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri, II*, 33, n. 8.

⁶⁶ We also know that Yazid summoned al-Zuhri together with a scholar of the Anṣār, 'Abdallāh b. Mughīth al-Ζafarī; Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl*, VII, ed. N. al-'Abbās (Cairo n.d.), 278:12: *'Abdallāh ... kāna 'āliman, hamala-hu Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik ilay-hi ma'a al-Zuhri fa-lam yazal muqīman 'inda-hu bi-al-Shām*. Also TMD, *Mukht.*, XIV, 79: *'Abdallāh ... istaqdama-hu Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik fa-kāna 'inda-hu ma'a al-Zuhri*.

⁶⁷ Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 38: 'Under 'Umar II (99-101/717-20) Al-Zuhri decided legal questions', quoting Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futūh Miṣr wa-akhbāru-hā*, ed. Ch. Torrey (New Haven 1922), 104 (a case was brought before 'Umar II, *wa-Ibn Shihāb qādī-hi yaawma 'idhin*). Horovitz's somewhat vague phrasing

We can now add a third term in office attested to in a passage which (if it is not garbled) shows that he was already 'Abd al-Malik's *qādi*.⁶⁸

We have further evidence concerning al-Zuhri's work in state administration. We know that he was a tax collector, an office which must have been far worse than that of judge in the eyes of the pious. In an evaluation of al-Zuhri as a transmitter of *hadīth* it was commented *wa-kāna ya'malu li-Banī Umayya*. This is no doubt meant to point out a flaw in his record.⁶⁹ Exactly what kind of '*amal*' is meant we find out elsewhere: 'Al-Zuhri went out to collect taxes', *kharaja al-Zuhri fī si'āyah*. The term *si'āyah* is glossed as the levying of the *sadaqah* tax.⁷⁰ In the report just quoted, al-Zuhri's role as tax collector forms the background to the main theme, namely his unintentional shedding of a man's blood (*fa-asāba rajulan bi-shay'*) while carrying out his official duty. Another report on the same incident (in which there is no mention of the *si'āyah*) explicitly refers to bloodwit to be paid to the relatives of the deceased.⁷¹ Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah spelt out the circumstances in which al-Zuhri caused the man's death: 'He was made a tax collector, then he flogged a man and the man died.'⁷²

The report that al-Zuhri was a tax collector is confirmed by another, going back to al-Zuhri himself:

I have never written down anything [i.e., of the *hadīth* transmitted to me]. Having been put in charge of the levying of taxes (*wa-la-qad walitu al-sadaqah*), I came to Sālim b. 'Abdallāh [i.e. Sālim b. 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb]. He took out for me the *kitāb al-sadaqah* [i.e.,

may indicate that he felt that the single piece of evidence he had to support al-Zuhri's judgeship under 'Umar II was insufficient. But the only Ibn Shihāb mentioned in *Tahdh.*, XII, 299, is our Ibn Shihāb and the report seems to be sound. Incidentally, the plaintiff could not have been 'Umar's elder brother al-Asbagh (*Futūh Misr*, 104:12) who died in 86/705, thirteen years before 'Umar ascended the throne; *TMD, MS*, III, 63; read instead: Banū l-Asbagh (as in *Futūh Misr*, 104:15).

⁶⁸ *TMD, Zuhri*, 109; *TMD, MS*, XV, 1027 (... *wa-kāna qādiyan bayna yaday Abd al-Malik*).

⁶⁹ *TMD, Tahdh.*, VI, 54.

⁷⁰ *Al-si'āyah huwa al-musaddiq* (sic; read probably [*sāhib*] *al-si'āyah huwa al-musaddiq*); Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rīkh*, I, 536. This should perhaps be linked to the following report about al-Zuhri (*al-Ma'rīfah wa-al-ta'rīkh*, I, 632): *kāna yashtarī tamr al-sadaqah thumma yad'u ilay-hi al-a'rāb fa-yaqsimu-hu bayna-hum*.

⁷¹ Ibn Sa'd, V, 214 (*asāba al-Zuhri daman khaṭa'an fa-kharaja wa-taraka ablahu wa-daraba fustāṭan* etc.); Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 34.

⁷² Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *al-Nafh al-shadhi fi sharḥ Jāmi' al-Tirmidhi*, ed. A.M. 'Abd al-Karīm (Riyadh 1409/1988), 544: *tawallā al-si'āyah fa-'azzara rajulan fa-māta*. For the source used by Ibn Sayyid al-Nās see *GAS*, I, 623, no. 2. The editor of *al-Nafh al-shadhi* reproaches Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (on p. 541n) for adducing this report. In general, his comments are an interesting portrayal of some contemporary Islamic attitudes.

a document about the levying of the *ṣadaqah* tax], read it out to me and I memorized it. Then I went to [Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad b.] ‘Amr b. Ḥazm. He read out to me the *kitāb al-‘uqūl* [viz. a document on bloodwit] and I memorized it.⁷³

Al-Zuhri's appointment as a tax collector is the backdrop to this autobiographical report, while its central concern is his boasting that he could commit to his memory a complete, and complex, document read out to him once. The context of this account suggests that the two documents, on the *ṣadaqah* and the *‘uqūl* respectively, were relevant to the duties of a tax collector. The preservation of these documents in the Umayyad period is of paramount importance. The *kitāb al-ṣadaqah* in question related to the taxing of livestock, namely camels and sheep.⁷⁴ The *kitāb al-‘uqūl* is probably the document known in Islamicist jargon as the *Ahd al-Ummah* or 'The Constitution of Medina'.⁷⁵ When was al-Zuhri a tax collector? Sālim b. ‘Abdallāh's death in 106/724 is our *terminus ante quem*. (Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad died more than ten years later.)

At some point al-Zuhri was the chief of the *shurṭah* for one of the Umayyad caliphs. An autobiographical report by the traditionist Khārijah b. Muṣab (d. 168/784) nicely demonstrates the traditionists' dilemma about al-Zuhri, and includes this rare piece of information about the latter:

⁷³ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamhīd*, VI, 108f; cf. Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā*, VII, 244. On ‘Amr b. Ḥazm see Lecker, “Amr b. Ḥazm al-Anṣārī and Qur’ān 2, 256: “No compulsion is there in religion”, *Oriens* (forthcoming). See also Kister, “*Lā taqra’ū l-qur’ānā ‘alā l-muṣḥafīyyīn*” = Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Iḥkām fī uṣūl al-ahkām*, ed. M.A. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz (Cairo 1398/1978), I, 289-300. On the preservation of documents from the time of the Prophet, cf. Lecker, ‘On the Preservation of the Letters of the Prophet Muḥammad’, in L.I. Conrad (ed.), *History and Historiography in Early Islamic Times: Studies and Perspectives* (forthcoming).

⁷⁴ Cf. Ibn Zanjawayh, *Kitāb al-Amwāl*, ed. Sh. Dh. Fayyād (Riyadh 1406/1986), II, 803: ... ‘an Ibn Shihāb fi al-ṣadaqāt, qāla: hādhīhi nuskhat kitāb rasūl Allāh (:) fi al-ṣadaqah, wa-hiya ‘inda ʻalā ‘Umar b. al-Khattāb, qāla Ibn Shihāb: agra’ā-ni-hā Sālim b. ‘Abdallāh fa-wa‘aytu-hā ‘alā wajhi-hā wa-hādhā kitāb tafsīri-hā: lā yu’khadhu ‘alā shay’ min al-ibil al-ṣadaqah hattā tabligha etc.; see also 807 (camels and sheep), 853f (sheep).

⁷⁵ A *hadīth* of ‘Alī has that the Prophet wrote for each *batn* or tribal group its *‘uqūl*, glossed as provisions concerning the duties of the *‘āqilah*, or the group of relations on the father's side responsible for the payment of bloodwit. The amounts of money to be paid as compensation in the case of specific injuries were prescribed; *Lisān al-‘arab* (Beirut 1968), s.v. *b.t.n.*, 54: *wa-fi hadīth ‘Alī ‘alay-hi al-salām: kataba ‘alā kull batn ‘uqūla-hu ... ay kataba ‘alay-him mā taghramu-hu al-‘āqilah min al-diyyāt fa-bayyana mā ‘alā kull qawn min-hā*.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON IBN SHIHĀB AL-ZUHRĪ

I came to al-Zuhri when he was the chief of the *shurṭah* for one of the [caliphs of the] Banū Marwān. I saw him riding [i.e., in a state procession], holding a *harbah* [javelin] in his hand, and before him [in the procession] were the people [i.e., the members of the *shurṭah* force under his command], holding *kāfirkūbāt* [cudgels, or whips]. I said [to myself]: 'May God render this scholar ugly' (*qabbaha Allāhu dhā min 'ālim*). I left without hearing [*hadīth*] from him. Then [i.e., years later] I regretted [it], I came to Yūnus [i.e., Yūnus b. Yazid al-Aylī] and heard from him the *hadīth* of al-Zuhri (*fa-samītu min-hu 'an al-Zuhri*).⁷⁶

In this report Khārijah's regret at not having transmitted from the despised chief of the *shurṭah* forms the main theme.

Finally, in the context of al-Zuhri's role in the *shurṭah* reference should be made here to the statement made by one of Bukhārī's teachers, Muḥammad b. Ishkāb al-Baghdādī (d. 261/874),⁷⁷ that al-Zuhri was a *jundi*. Al-Dhahabī, who quotes this statement, adds that he had the rank of *amīr*: *kāna fi rutbatī amīr*. Elsewhere, al-Dhahabī gives this description of al-Zuhri: *kāna ... muhtashiman jalilān bi-ziyy al-ajnād lahu śūrah kabirah fi dawlati Bani Umayya*, 'He had many dependents and servants, was a man of eminence, was dressed in the outfit of the *ajnād*, and enjoyed high rank in the state of the Banū Umayyah'.⁷⁸ Al-Dhahabī remarks that the fact that al-Zuhri dyed his hair, wore the outfit of the *jund* and served (*khadama*) Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik drew criticism from people of little understanding.⁷⁹

Another despised symbol of association with the worldly rulers was the existence of a doorkeeper (*bawwāb*, or *ādhin*). Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah once heard al-Zuhri complain to Muḥammad b. Ishāq that he had not seen him for some time. 'This *ādhin* of yours prevented

⁷⁶ TMD, MS, V, 407; TMD, Mukht., VII, 324; TMD, Tahdh., V, 29. Concerning the *kāfirkūbāt* see al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa-al-tabyīn*, ed. 'A. al-S. Hārūn (Cairo 1395/1975), I, 142; al-Jāḥiẓ, *Rasā'il*, ed. 'A. al-S. Hārūn (Cairo 1384/1964), I, 20.

⁷⁷ Athāmina, 'The 'Ulama' in the Opposition', 166 (where I first found this passage) infers from this that al-Zuhri was 'banned'; cf. above, n. 59. On processions (under the 'Abbāsids and the Fāṭimids) cf. EI², s.v. Mawkib, section I (P. Sanders).

⁷⁸ Tahdh., IX, 121f.

⁷⁹ Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, V, 341, 337. Cf. the accusation directed at the traditionist Shahr b. Ḥawshab al-Shāmī (d. ca. 111/729), a *mawlā* who was at some point in charge of the treasury (*bayt al-māl*), that he wore the outfit of a *jundi* (... *min tazayyihi bi-ziyy al-jund*); Tahdh., IV, 372. Shahr was of the people of Damascus, or, according to some, of the people of Himṣ; TMD, Mukht., XI, 5.

⁷⁹ Al-Dhahabī, *al-Ruwāt al-thiqāt al-mutakallam fi-him bi-mā lā yūjibu raddahum*, ed. M.I. al-Mawsili (Beirut, 1412/1992), 26: *wa-kadhā takallama man lā yaftamu fi al-Zuhri li-kawni-hi khadaba bi-al-sawād wa-labisā ziyy al-jund wa-khadama Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik*.

me from entering,' replied Ibn Ishāq. So al-Zuhri told his *bawwāb* to let him in whenever he came.⁸⁰

One or more of al-Zuhri's offices may be linked with his stay in Egypt at the time of 'Abd al-Malik. From an autobiographical report of al-Zuhri we learn that 'Abd al-Malik sent him to his brother, 'Abd al-'Azīz, then governor of Egypt.⁸¹ This had to take place before 'Abd al-'Azīz's death in 86/705.⁸²

Al-Zuhri was reportedly in financial hardship and debt when, as a young man in his twenties or early thirties, he arrived in Damascus.⁸³ Later in his life different people are supposed to have reminded him of those difficult times. Mālik b. Anas reportedly spoke of a *mawlā* of the open-handed al-Zuhri who reminded his master of his former monetary problems advising him, after he had become rich, to keep his money for himself.⁸⁴ In addition, Rajā' b. Ḥaywah is said to have told al-Zuhri to stop spending so lavishly. 'I am not sure,' Rajā' said, 'that "these people" will not withhold from you what they have' (*lā āmanu an yaḥbisā hā'ulā'i al-qawm mā bi-aydī-him 'an-ka*).⁸⁵ In other words, Rajā' feared that the Umayyads would stop remunerating al-Zuhri. Typically, 'these people' is a euphemistic designation of the Umayyads, and no explicit mention is made of money.

2. Al-Zuhri's First Meeting with 'Abd al-Malik and 'the *Hadīth* of the Three Mosques'

The precise date of al-Zuhri's meeting with 'Abd al-Malik is important in connection with his role in promoting the Islamic sanctity of

⁸⁰ Ibn Shāhin, *Ta'rikh asmā' al-thiqāt mimman nūqila 'an-hum al-'ilm*, ed. 'A. al-M.A. Qal'ajī (Beirut 1406/1986), 280f. See also Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 537.

⁸¹ Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā*, VII, 247.

⁸² Al-Kindī, *Kitāb wulāt Miṣr* (Beirut 1407/1987), 49. The statement (*Muqaffā*, VII, 247) that before he was sent to Egypt, al-Zuhri had been attached to Sa'id b. al-Musayyab for eight years, until Sa'id died (*hattā tuwuffiya*) must be an error because Sa'id died in 94/713; *GAS*, I, 276.

⁸³ TMD, *Zuhri*, 12 (Ibn Abī Dhi'b: *kāna bn Shihāb qad dāqat hālu-hu wa-rabiqa-hu dayn*). See Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 37: 'Like so many before him, he had gone to Damascus in the hope to free himself from harsh financial circumstances.' Admittedly, the details on al-Zuhri's troubles serve a literary aim, too: they seek to create a sharp contrast between his state before his crucial meeting with the caliph and after it. In the Islamic literature there are many similar stories about the humble beginnings of the rich and famous.

⁸⁴ Dhahabī, *Nubalā*, V, 338 (*kāna bn Shihāb min askhā al-nās, fa-lammā ajāba tilka al-amwāl, qāla la-hu mawlan la-hu wa-huwa ya'izu-hu: qad ra'ayta mā marra 'alay-ka min al-dīq, fa-'nzur kayfa takūnu, amsik 'alay-ka mālaka*).

⁸⁵ Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāyah*, IX, 343:-2.

Jerusalem. Al-Zuhri is the key figure in al-Ya'qubī's famous report about 'Abd al-Malik's wish to provide the Muslims of Shām with a substitute for the Ka'bah: when the people complained to 'Abd al-Malik about his prohibiting the pilgrimage to Mecca, al-Ya'qubī says, the caliph replied: *hādhā bn Shihāb al-Zuhri yuhaddithu-kum anna rasūl Allāhi qāla: lā tushaddu al-rihāl illā ilā thalāthati masājid: al-masjid al-harām wa-masjidī wa-masjid bayt al-maqdis*'. 'Here is Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri who transmits to you the Prophet's saying: "The saddles of the camels shall only be fastened for a journey to three mosques, namely the Ka'bah, my own mosque [i.e., in Medina] and the mosque of Jerusalem.'"⁸⁶ The caliph allegedly sought support from the young al-Zuhri who helped him repel his critics.⁸⁷ According to al-Ya'qubī, 'Abd al-Malik intended to provide a substitute for the Ka'bah against the background of his conflict with Ibn al-Zubayr. There may well have been other motives behind 'Abd al-Malik's project, but it is not to be expected that al-Ya'qubī (or for that matter any other medieval historian) would furnish us with a detailed and balanced account of these motives.

A discussion on whether or not the scene described by al-Ya'qubī really took place, or whether al-Zuhri invented the *hadīth* or merely transmitted it, seems futile to me. Suffice it to say that the *hadīth* was transmitted in the Umayyad period and that its transmission was expedient to Umayyad objectives.⁸⁸ The fact that al-Zuhri is mentioned in some of the *isnāds* of this *hadīth* indicates that he was one of its transmitters, though he was certainly not the only one.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Al-Ya'qubī, *Ta'rīkh* (Beirut 1379/1960), II, 261 [ed. M. Houtsma (Leiden 1883), II, 311].

⁸⁷ 'The *hadīth* of the three mosques', < (...) 'Abd al-Razzāq < Ma'mar < al-Zuhri < Sa'id b. al-Musayyab < Abū Hurayrah, appears at the very beginning of Muḥammad b. Ahmad al-Wāsiṭī, *Fadā'il al-bayt al-muqaddas*, ed. I. Hasson (Jerusalem 1979), 3f; the same is true for Ḏiyā' al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wāhid al-Maqdisī, *Fadā'il Bayt al-Maqdis*, ed. M.M. al-Hāfiẓ (Damascus 1405/1985), 39f, who quotes different variants of this *hadīth* equipped with different *isnāds*, including this one: ... Sufyān b. 'Uyaynah < al-Zuhri < Sa'id b. al-Musayyab < Abū Hurayrah.

⁸⁸ Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 35, disputes Goldziher's assumption that al-Zuhri invented this *hadīth*: 'If the report of Ya'qubī deserves any credence at all, then we must take it that Al-Zuhri rushed to 'Abdul Malik from Madīnah to communicate to him a Hadīth heard from the authorities in Madīnah, of which he could hope that it would help the Khalifah in his political projects. That he himself invented it, as some have implied, is unbelievable Whatever one may think about the authenticity of the Hadīth, there is no ground whatever to doubt but that Al-Zuhri really had heard the Hadīth from the mouth of Sa'id ibn Al-Musayyab.'

⁸⁹ Goldziher mentioned that in Abū Dāwūd 'the *hadīth* of the three mosques' is equipped with the *isnād*: al-Zuhri < Sa'id b. al-Musayyib [or al-Musayyab] < Abū

In a section of his book on the *hadīth* literature entitled 'Did al-Zuhri Provide a Substitute for the Pilgrimage? Refutation of al-Ya'qubī and Goldziher', Azami argues that

al-Zuhri's meeting with 'Abd al-Malik ... did not take place earlier than 81 A.H. ... As he began to build the Dome of the Rock in 69 A.H., he might have announced his decree on the substitute for *al-Hajj* on the authority of al-Zuhri in the beginning of the year 69 A.H.⁹⁰ At this time al-Zuhri was somewhere between ten and eighteen years of age. It is inconceivable that a mere child of ten or a boy of eighteen had already achieved such a great fame and respect — not in his native land al-Madinah, but far away in the anti al-Madinah region, Syria — that he was able to cancel the divine obligatory order of *al-Hajj* and was in a position to command a substitute.⁹¹

Azami's information on the date of al-Zuhri's arrival in Damascus is incomplete; as we shall see there is sufficient evidence linking al-Zuhri's arrival with the war between the Umayyads and Ibn al-Zubayr. Obviously, this date is closely connected to al-Zuhri's year of birth. It was al-Zuhri himself who attempted to establish that he

Hurayrah < the Prophet; *Muslim Studies*, II, 45, n. 7; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, ed. A.S. 'Ali (Cairo 1371/1952), I, 469. Horovitz noticed that in the canonical collections of *hadīth* this alleged saying of the Prophet is sometimes quoted with the *isnād*: al-Zuhri < Sa'id b. al-Musayyab < Abū Hurayrah, and sometimes the *hadīth* is provided with another *isnād* which does not mention al-Zuhri at all; Horovitz, *Et*, s.v. al-Zuhri; Horovitz, 'Earliest Biographies', II, 35. On this *hadīth* see Kister, "You Shall Only Set out for Three Mosques": A Study of an Early Tradition', *Le Muséon* 82 (1969), 173-96; reprinted, with additional notes, in idem, *Studies in Jāhiliyya and Early Islam* (London 1980), no. XIII; Elad, 'Why did 'Abd al-Malik Build the Dome of the Rock? A Re-examination of the Muslim Sources', in J. Raby and J. Johns (eds.), *Bayt al-Maqdis: 'Abd al-Malik's Jerusalem*, I (Oxford 1992), 33-58, at 43f. On whether the Prophet uttered these words, F. Buhl, *Das Leben Muhammeds*², trans. H. Schaefer (reprint Heidelberg 1955), 373n, writes: 'Daß der Prophet dies nie gesagt haben kann, bedarf für jemanden, der auch nur eine flüchtige Kenntnis von seiner Geschichte hat, keines näheren Beweises.'

⁹⁰ A more plausible date would be the year in which the Dome was completed, namely 72/691-2 or 73/692-3; Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem*, 44-45, 53, 153; idem, 'The History and Topography of Jerusalem during the Early Islamic Period', *JSAI* 14 (1991), 41-70, at 58. The beginning of 'Abd al-Malik's Temple Mount project should possibly be linked with his victory, at Ajnādayn in Filastīn, over forces loyal to Ibn al-Zubayr under Nātil b. Qays (on this battle see al-Mas'ūdi, *Muřūj al-dhabab*, ed. Ch. Pellat [Beirut 1966-74], III, 299). This (second) battle of Ajnādayn appears to have been the turning point in 'Abd al-Malik's struggle against Ibn al-Zubayr. See also G. Rotter, *Die Umayyaden und der zweite Bürgerkrieg (680-692)* (Wiesbaden 1982), 183 ('Mit diesem Sieg gewann 'Abdalmalik die Offensive gegenüber dem Hīgāz zurück').

⁹¹ Azami, *Studies in Early Hadīth Literature*, 290f.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON IBN SHIHĀB AL-ZUHRĪ

first came to Damascus during the struggle against Ibn al-Zubayr. In another relevant report originating with al-Zuhri (see below) it is stated that he came to visit the caliph Marwān b. al-Hakam (who reigned in 64-5/683-4) after having reached the age of puberty (*wafadtu 'alā Marwān wa-anā muhtalim*). The mention of puberty points to 50/670 (or 51/671) as the year of al-Zuhri's birth.⁹² Ahmad b. Ṣāliḥ⁹³ stated that when the battle of the Ḥarrak took place (63/683), al-Zuhri was already mature, old enough to apprehend it or to take part in it.⁹⁴

Why did al-Zuhri attempt to establish a date of birth which was as early as possible? Because the earlier the year of his birth, the more Companions of the Prophet he could meet and learn from.⁹⁵ But the

⁹² Beside these two dates, his birth is also dated to 56 AH and 58 AH; *TMD, Zuhri*, 36f, 42. According to Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt*, I, 162, al-Zuhri died in Ramadan 124 aged 74. This dates his birth to 50 AH. However, others said that he died aged 66 (which brings us to 58 AH) or 72 (which brings us to 52 AH); Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā*, VII, 250. Horovitz (*El*, s.v. 'al-Zuhri) suggested that he was probably born in 50 or 51 AH, and his view is accepted by Azami, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature*, 278n. But later in his book Azami is less committed to this statement: on p. 288, Azami rejects the claim that al-Zuhri, who 'was then between seven and fifteen years of age', visited Marwān b. al-Hakam; on p. 290 he states, as we have just seen, that in 69 AH al-Zuhri 'was somewhere between ten and eighteen years of age'. Dūrī, 'al-Zuhri', 1, dates his birth to 51-2/671. If indeed al-Zuhri was seventy-two when he died in 124/742 (Dūrī, *Rise*, 41), then he was born in 52 AH.

The 56 AH and later versions seem to rule out any role of al-Zuhri during the conflict with Ibn al-Zubayr, who was defeated and killed in 73 AH. Yahyā b. Bukayr said, quoting al-Layth b. Sa'd, that al-Zuhri came to 'Abd al-Malik in 82 AH. According to Yahyā, al-Zuhri was born in 56 AH, and when al-Zuhri's claim that he had visited Marwān was mentioned to him, he rejected it, stating that he came to 'Abd al-Malik in 82 AH; *Tahdhīb*, VIII, 154; *al-Mārifah wa-al-tā'rikh*, III, 333. Yahyā b. Ma'in denied that al-Zuhri transmitted from Ibn 'Umar who died in 74/693, and Juynboll (*Muslim Tradition*, 169, quoting *Tahdhīb*, IX, 450) infers that he is thereby 'establishing a terminus post quem for al-Zuhri to have started his tradition collection'. However, if indeed al-Zuhri had come to Damascus before the fighting against Ibn al-Zubayr was over (see below), then the terminus post quem was a few years earlier.

⁹³ Al-Misri; see *Tahdhīb*, I, 39f. See also Dhahabī, *Tā'rikh al-islām*, 247 (*qad jama'a Ahmad b. Ṣāliḥ al-Misri 'ilm al-Zuhri*).

⁹⁴ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamhid*, X, 8: *qad adraka al-Zuhri al-Ḥarrāh wa-huwa bālīgh wa-'aqala-hā—azunnu-hu qāla: wa-shahida-hā*. (The transmitter was not certain about the precise wording of Ahmad's statement.) According to Muhammād b. Yahyā al-Dhuhlī (ibid; see on him *GAS*, I, 134), al-Zuhri was born in, or about, 50 AH.

⁹⁵ Cf. Dhahabī, *Tā'rikh al-islām*, 227: al-Zuhri was born in 50 AH *wa-ṭalaba al-'ilm fi awākhir 'asr al-sahāba wa-la-hu nayyif wa-'isbrūna sana*. Also Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt*, I, 162: he met ten Companions. See the list of these Companions in Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā*, VII, 240.

existence of a motive does not automatically lead to the conclusion that al-Zuhri's claims were false: indeed it could be argued that in al-Ya'qūbi's famous report 'Abd al-Malik referred to al-Zuhri as someone who was at hand, ready to confirm that a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was an acceptable practice (*hādhā bn Shihāb al-Zuhri yuhaddithu-kum* etc.). In any case, al-Zuhri's first meeting with 'Abd al-Malik, which could probably have taken place in 72/691-2 or 71/690-91, should be separated from his permanent settlement in Damascus several years later.⁹⁶

According to one autobiographical report (which is traced back to al-Zuhri himself), al-Zuhri first arrived in Damascus and met 'Abd al-Malik a decade or more after the extinguishing of Ibn al-Zubayr's rebellion. The date is indicated by the mention of 'Abd al-Malik's governor in Medina at that time, namely Hishām b. Ismā'il al-Makhzūmī.⁹⁷ Hishām was appointed governor of Medina in 83/702.⁹⁸ He was replaced in Rabī' al-Awwal of 87 AH, having been in office for about three years and eleven months.⁹⁹ But the chronological indication included in this report is problematic. When we take a closer look at it, we discover two contradictory statements. In the opening passage al-Zuhri mentions a general state of destitution in Medina, following the *fitnah* of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, as the immediate cause of his travel to Damascus (*asāba ahla l-Madīna hāja zamāna fitnati 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān fa-'ammat ahla l-balad*). The mention of the *fitnah* or civil war and the general state of affairs are attributable to the conflict with Ibn al-Zubayr and are therefore incongruous with the reference to Hishām b. Ismā'il's governorship, which began some ten years after the *fitnah*. The internal contradiction indicates that the report is made up of two separate accounts ascribed to al-Zuhri, which include conflicting statements about the time of his arrival in Damascus. The opening passage of this

⁹⁶ Horovitz (*EI*, s.v. al-Zuhri) suggested, relying on al-Ya'qūbi's report, that al-Zuhri visited 'Abd al-Malik's court before Ibn al-Zubayr's fall in 73/692: 'If Ya'qūbi's story is worthy of belief, al-Zuhri must have brought the *hadīth* to Damascus at latest in 73 (692), the year in which the anti-caliph fell, and could not have been more than 23 then. This stay of al-Zuhri's in Damascus, if it is historical at all, could only have been a temporary one; his permanent settlement in Damascus only took place at a considerably later date.'

⁹⁷ *TMD*, *Zuhri*, 17f, 23f.

⁹⁸ Tab., VI, 384 [II, 1127] (citing Wāqidi).

⁹⁹ Tab., VI, 427 [II, 1182]. For 82/701 as the date in which al-Zuhri and 'Abd al-Malik 'established their relationship of scholar and royal patron', see Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, II, 21f.

problematic report conforms to al-Zuhri's claim (on which see more below) that he arrived in Damascus towards the end of the struggle against Ibn al-Zubayr. The mention of Hishām b. Ismā'il also contradicts the indication (see Section 3 below) that al-Zuhri was already with 'Abd al-Malik in Jerusalem before the plague of 79/698 or 80/699.

It could be argued that the mention of Hishām b. Ismā'il roughly conforms to the report, again an autobiographical one, according to which al-Zuhri arrived in Damascus during Ibn al-Ash'ath's revolt (82/701). However, this is not the case. The precise wording is important: *qadimtu Dimashqa zamāna taharruki bn al-ash'ath, wa-'Abd al-Malik mashghūl yawma'idhin bi-sha'ni-hi*.¹⁰⁰ Fortunately, a variant text is found in the *Ta'rikh* of Abū Zur'ah al-Dimashqī:¹⁰¹ *wa-kāna maqdamu bn Shihāb Dimashqa zamāna Muṣ'ab, wa-'Abd al-Malik yawma'idhin mashghūl bi-sha'ni-hi*. In other words, we have here Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr, not Ibn al-Ash'ath.¹⁰² Obviously, 'Muṣ'ab' is the correct reading: Abū Zur'ah infers from this report that al-Zuhri had arrived in Damascus before 'Abd al-Malik marched against Muṣ'ab and that this includes an indication concerning his birth year: *fa-dallanā hadīthu bni Shihāb hādhā anna maqdama-hu Dimashqa qabla rahīl 'Abd al-Malik ilā Muṣ'ab, wa-hādhā dalīl 'alā sinni-hi*, 'This *hadīth* of Ibn Shihāb proves that he had come to Damascus before 'Abd al-Malik's departure to [the expedition against] Muṣ'ab, and this is a proof concerning his age'.¹⁰³ This report (in both the 'Ibn al-Ash'ath' and 'Muṣ'ab' versions) is quoted by Abū Zur'a < Ahmad b. Ṣalih < 'Anbasah b. Khālid¹⁰⁴ < Yūnus¹⁰⁵ < al-Zuhri.¹⁰⁶ By replacing Ibn al-Ash'ath with Muṣ'ab we go back one decade in time. Hence this is yet another statement that al-Zuhri came to Damascus during the struggle against Ibn al-Zubayr. The sources do not link al-Zuhri's arrival in Damascus with the revolt of Ibn al-Ash'ath.

¹⁰⁰ *TMD, Zuhri*, 34.

¹⁰¹ Cf. on him G. Rotter, 'Abū Zur'a al-Dimashqī (st. 281/894) und das Problem der frühen arabischen Geschichtsschreibung in Syrien', *Die Welt des Orients* 6 (1970-71), 80-104.

¹⁰² Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 583f. Cf. I, 408 (Ibn al-Ash'ath).

¹⁰³ Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 584.

¹⁰⁴ b. Yazīd al-Ayli, a *mawlā* of the Umayyads; *Tahdhīb*, VIII, 154.

¹⁰⁵ I.e. Yūnus b. Yazīd al-Ayli, who was also a *mawlā* of the Umayyads and 'Anbasah's uncle; *Tahdhīb*, XI, 450f. On Yūnus see M. Muranyi, *'Abd Allāh b. Wahb: Leben und Werk; al-Muwaṭṭa': Kitāb al-muḥāraba* (Wiesbaden 1992), 206f.

¹⁰⁶ How did 'Muṣ'ab' become 'Ibn al-Ash'ath'? It is plausible that Muṣ'ab was first corrupted to Ash'ath, and at a later stage the 'Ibn' was added in order to 'adapt' the report to historical fact.

Abū Zur'ah relates al-Zuhri's first arrival in Damascus to the dispute about al-Zuhri's birth year and quotes from two informants the account that al-Zuhri was born in 50 AH.¹⁰⁷ However, one of his informants also told him, having reported the 50 AH birth date: 'I have not heard a reliable statement concerning al-Zuhri's age' (*innī lam asma' li-l-Zuhri bi-sinn a'rifu-hā*). Answering his question about his source for dating al-Zuhri's birth to 50 AH, the second informant said that his source was one of the Banū Zuhrah (*ba'd al-Zuhriyyīnā*).¹⁰⁸

The battle against Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr in Iraq and Muṣ'ab's death had taken place before al-Hajjāj was sent by 'Abd al-Malik to fight Ibn al-Zubayr in Arabia.¹⁰⁹ Al-Zuhri's role in transmitting 'the *hadīth* of the three mosques' should not be related to 69/688, as Azami suggested, but to 72/691 or 71/690.

On the basis of the available evidence it can be argued that al-Zuhri first came to Damascus before the end of the struggle against Ibn al-Zubayr, in time to play a role in the promulgation of 'the *hadīth* of the three mosques'. But the young al-Zuhri's support for 'Abd al-Malik precisely at that point was more meaningful than it at first seems. We realize this when we consider an important historical fact, namely the role played by other members of al-Zuhri's clan, the Banū Zuhrah of Quraysh, in supporting Ibn al-Zubayr. Al-Zuhri's father was a partisan of Ibn al-Zubayr.¹¹⁰ More importantly, Ibn al-Zubayr's last two governors in Medina, Jābir b. al-Aswad b. 'Awf and Talḥah b. 'Abdallāh b. 'Awf, who were cousins, were of the Banū Zuhrah.¹¹¹ This indicates widespread support for Ibn al-Zubayr among the Banū Zuhrah who lived in Medina. Jābir officiated as the governor of Medina between 68/687-8 and 71/690-91.¹¹² In 71/690 he was replaced by Talḥah, who was Ibn al-Zubayr's last governor in Medina. Talḥah fled when an expedition force dispatched

¹⁰⁷ Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 584.

¹⁰⁸ Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 613; paragraph no. 1744 on p. 613 belongs immediately after paragraph 1645 on p. 584.

¹⁰⁹ Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 583. The battle against Muṣ'ab was in 72/691; Yāqūt, s.v. Maskin; *EI²*, s.v. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr (H.A.R. Gibb); Rotter, *Die Umayyaden*, 230 (the expeditions took place in the first half of 72/summer-autumn 691 and the decisive battle was fought in October 691).

¹¹⁰ Horovitz, *EI²*, s.v. al-Zuhri. Moreover, the father belonged to Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr's troop; Ibn Khallikān, *Waṣayāt al-a'yān*, ed. I. 'Abbās (Beirut 1968-72), IV, 178.

¹¹¹ Ibn Ḥazm, *Ansāb*, 131.

¹¹² Waki', I, 124.

by 'Abd al-Malik under Tāriq b. 'Amr arrived in Medina.¹¹³ Tāriq captured Medina in 72 AH.¹¹⁴ These are the presumed circumstances of al-Zuhri's first arrival at 'Abd al-Malik's court. Al-Zuhri did not flee; on the contrary, he joined the victorious party to which he could offer a sharp intellect and great ambition.

3. The Caliph 'Abd al-Malik and al-Zuhri in Ḥiyā' (Aelia Capitolina)

There is yet another piece of evidence linking al-Zuhri, 'Abd al-Malik, and Jerusalem. This is contained in an utterance by al-Zuhri himself reported by the abovementioned Shu'ayb b. Abī Ḥamzah al-Himṣī:¹¹⁵

I heard 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān in Ḥiyā¹¹⁶ exhorting the people [i.e. from the pulpit, in a *khuṭbah*], before the outbreak of the plague (*waja'*) which caused him to leave for al-Muwaqqar, with these words: 'The knowledge will soon pass away, so let anyone having knowledge reveal it without exceeding with regard to it the due limit [or without zealotry] and without ignoring [or neglecting] it.'¹¹⁶

We are not concerned here with the alleged official endorsement of the collection of 'knowledge', obviously in the form of *hadīth*, but with the setting of the scene. Firstly, concerning al-Muwaqqar: it is true that elsewhere it is associated with 'Abd al-Malik's son, Yazīd,¹¹⁷ which is

¹¹³ Tab., VI, 166 [II, 818]. According to Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, XI, 37, Ṭalḥah replaced Jābir in Ṣafar, 70 AH (= August 689); Rotter, *Die Umayyaden und der zweite Bürgerkrieg*, 184. For an earlier term of Jābir in this office see Rotter, *loc. cit.*, 186n = Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, V, 189 (<Madā'ini).

¹¹⁴ Khalifah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 341. *TMD, MS, VIII*, 488, quotes Khalifah, who says that Tāriq captured Medina at the end of 72 AH. Wāqidi (*TMD, MS, VIII*, 488) says that 'Abd al-Malik appointed Tāriq as the governor of Medina in 73/692 and that he remained in office for five months.

¹¹⁵ See above, n. 22.

¹¹⁶ Abū Zur'ah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 409 (*samītu 'Abd al-Malik bi-Ḥiyā*, *qabla an yaqa'a al-waja'* *alladhī kharaja min-hu ilā al-Muwaqqar, khaṭīban, yaqūlu: .inna al-'ilm sa-yuqbaḍu qabdan sari'an, fa-man kāna 'inda-hu 'ilm fa-l-yuzbir-hu ghayra ghālin fi-hi wa-lā jāfin 'an-hu*). See this passage also in *TMD, MS, X*, 516; *TMD, Mukht.*, XV, 228. On the Umayyad attempts to write down the *hadīth* cf. now Schoeler, 'Mündliche Thora', 227f.

¹¹⁷ Yāqūt, s.v.; Jarīr, *Dīwān*, ed. N.M. Amīn Tāhā (Cairo [1969]), I, 480 (*al-Muwaqqar... wa-bi-hā kāna yanẓilu Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Malik*).

Al-Zuhri's student al-Walid b. Muḥammad al-Muwaqqarī al-Balqāwī was the *mawlā* of Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Malik; *Tahdhīb*, XI, 148f. Cf. A. Rippin, 'al-Zuhri, *Naskh al-Qur'ān* and the problem of early *Tafsīr* texts', *BSOAS* 47 (1984), 22-43, at 29:7.

presumably due to the fact that the latter often stayed there. However, al-Muwaqqar may well have belonged to the Umayyads beforehand.¹¹⁸

Secondly, the report suggests (without explicitly saying so) that 'Abd al-Malik fled to al-Muwaqqar from Jerusalem.¹¹⁹ The relative dating of 'Abd al-Malik's alleged *khuṭbah*, a marginal point in this report, looks particularly reliable. It is also important: the caliph flees from the plague to safety¹²⁰ when it strikes his permanent place of residence, or the place where he lives over an extended period of time.¹²¹ In other words, the report may suggest that 'Abd al-Malik stayed in Jerusalem for a length of time.¹²²

¹¹⁸ See also Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem*, 156n. Cf. al-Hamdānī, *Sifat jazirat al-'arab*, ed. M. b. 'A. al-Akwa' (Riyadh 1394/1974), 334 [ed. D.H. Müller (Leiden 1884f), 182], who lists al-Muwaqqar among the places inhabited by the tribe of Salīḥ (*masākin Salīḥ*).

That the passage from Abū Zur'ah which is discussed here deals with 'Abd al-Malik, not with his son Yazīd, is shown by an abridged version of it found elsewhere. This version, while omitting the background details important for us here, confirms that the protagonist is 'Abd al-Malik; Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāyah*, IX, 64:-7 (al-Zuhri: *sam'i tu 'Abd al-Malik yaqūlu fi khuṭbatī-hi*) etc.

¹¹⁹ On a visit of al-Zuhri to Jerusalem see also Elad, 'The History and Topography of Jerusalem', 55. We also find a reference to 'Abd al-Malik's presence in Jerusalem in connection with his Temple Mount project; *Uns jalil*, I, 272, 273: 'When 'Abd al-Malik came to Jerusalem and ordered the Dome to be built on the venerable Rock, he sent out letters' etc.; 'Abd al-Malik described to the engineers what he desired with regard to the building of the Dome and its structure, and they made for him while he was in Jerusalem (*wa-huwa bi-Bayt al-Maqdis*) the small dome east of the Dome of the Rock which is called the Dome of the Chain.' M. Rosen-Ayalon, *The Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif: An Iconographic Study* (Jerusalem 1989), 26, believes the claim that the Dome of the Chain was a model to be Mujīr al-Dīn's own invention. But it is doubtful that he invents anything; plausibly, he quotes earlier sources. On 'Abd al-Malik's arrival in Jerusalem on the occasion of the project cf. Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem*, 156.

¹²⁰ A humorous conversation between Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik and an anonymous person, who advised him not to leave Damascus for al-Ruṣāfah, includes the remark that no caliph had ever been infected by the plague; Tab., VII, 207 [II, 1737f], quoting Madā'inī (*lā takhrūj, fa-inna l-khulafā' lā yut'ānū wa-lam nara khalifa tu'ina*). Hishām refused to experiment on himself (*a-turīdūna an tujaribū bī?*). But cf. *Uns jalil*, I, 271: Marwān b. al-Ḥakam died in the *ta'ūn* (Damascus, Ramadan 65 AH). For other versions concerning the cause of Marwān's death see al-Diyārbakrī, *Tā'rikh al-khamīs* (Cairo 1283/1866), II, 307.

¹²¹ Cf. the section entitled 'The Question of Plague and Agricultural Expansion' in Conrad, 'Historical Evidence and the Archaeology of Early Islam', in S. Seikaly et al. (eds.), *Quest for Understanding: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Memory of Malcolm H. Kerr* (Beirut 1991), 263-82, at 269f, and in particular Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik's stay in al-Ruṣāfah whenever plague broke out in Damascus; Conrad, 'Arabic Plague Chronologies and Treatises', *Studia Islamica* 54 (1981), 51-93, at 75.

¹²² Cf. Rosen-Ayalon, *The Early Islamic Monuments*, 1.

Thirdly, the chronological aspect is of particular interest to us here. It is suggested that this plague was the one which broke out in Shām in 79/698 or 80/699. The source reporting the latter date states that the plague prevented the people of Shām from taking part that year in the *ghazw*, i.e., the annual expedition against Byzantium.¹²³ The source giving the former date also mentions the absence of the people of Shām from the expedition.¹²⁴

Admittedly, these are not the only possible dates, as we know of another plague which according to some took place during the reign of 'Abd al-Malik, who died in Damascus in Shawwāl, 86 AH.¹²⁵ According to Aṣma'ī, 'Abd al-Malik died during the plague known as 'The Plague of the Maidens' (*al-fatayāt*) or 'The Plague of the Notables' (*ashrāf*), or shortly thereafter.¹²⁶ However, because 'Abd al-Malik died in Damascus, it seems impossible to connect the 86/705 plague with that which caused him to flee Jerusalem for al-Muwaqqar. Moreover, the year of 'The Plague of the Maidens/Notables' is uncertain: while Aṣma'ī dates it during the reign of 'Abd al-Malik, Madā'inī dates it to Shawwāl 87/September–October 706,¹²⁷ that is one year after 'Abd al-Malik's death.

In view of all this it is argued that the 79/80 AH plague is more probable and that 'Abd al-Malik's stay in Jerusalem took place before its outbreak.

4. Al-Zuhri's Estate in the Region of Shaghb wa-Badā

Al-Zuhri was a loyal and trustworthy supporter of the Umayyads and for this he was rewarded generously. The sources on al-Zuhri's biography abound with stories about the Umayyad caliphs paying his debts. The context of the reports on these debts is invariably

¹²³ Khalifah, *Ta'rikh*, I, 360 (*wa-fi-hā* [80 A.H.] *asāba ahl al-Shām tā'un shadid fa-lam yakun la-hum dhālikā al-'āma ghazu*).

¹²⁴ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntazam*, VI, 203 (*wuqū'u al-tā'un bi-l-Shām hattā kāda al-nās yafnawna min shiddati-hi, wa-lam yughza tilka al-sanah*). The text in Ibn Kathir, *Bidāyah*, IX, 27, is clearer: *fa-fi-hā* [79 AH] *waqa'a tā'un 'azim bi-al-Shām hattā kādu yafnawna min shiddati-hi wa-lam yaghzu fi-hā ahad min ahl al-Shām li-dū'fim wa-gillati-him*.

¹²⁵ Ibn Kathir, *Bidāyah*, IX, 68.

¹²⁶ Conrad, 'Plague Chronologies', 55f, quoting Ibn Qutaybah, *Ma'ārif*, 601 (*wa-māta fi-hi 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān aw ba'da-hu bi-qatil*). Among the notables who died in this plague Asma'ī includes 'Ali b. Aṣma', who was no other than his great-grandfather; Ibn Durayd, *al-Ishtiqāq*, ed. 'A. al-S. Hārūn (Cairo 1378/1958), 272.

¹²⁷ Conrad, 'Plague Chronologies', 62, 68f, 83f. See also Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntazam*, VI, 267, who adduces both versions.

favourable to al-Zuhri, because they serve to emphasize his generosity. Al-Zuhri was no ascetic, he was fond of perfume, the use of which symbolized a high standard of living. Al-Zuhri's nephew (Ibn Akhī al-Zuhri) was once asked whether his uncle used perfume. He replied: 'I could smell the musk from the whip of his riding-beast.'¹²⁸ The granting of estates to family members and loyal supporters was common among the Umayyad caliphs.¹²⁹

The stories about al-Zuhri's generosity have already been mentioned (obviously, the extravagant cases were more readily recorded). It is told that al-Zuhri could afford to be in debt because of the large revenues he received from his estates: *wa-kāna fī 'ugadi-hi waṭūn li-dayni-hi*, 'his [revenues from his] estates were enough to cover his debts'.¹³⁰ '*Uqdah*' is 'an estate consisting of land, or of land and a house, or of a house or land yielding a revenue'.¹³¹ Having been blamed for being in debt, al-Zuhri reportedly said that the debt only amounted to twenty thousand dinars while each of his five springs (or underground canals, *a'yūn*) yielded (annually) forty thousand dinars. He added that his only heir was his grandson, to whom he would not mind bequeathing nothing. The informant explains that the said grandson was an immoral person.¹³² In this context it is important to note that al-Zuhri is said to have 'planted' the palm trees in his estate when he became old,¹³³ an indication that al-Zuhri's

¹²⁸ Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāyah*, IX, 347.

¹²⁹ In addition to the estate discussed below, al-Zuhri had a court in Medina: in an allegedly autobiographical report going back to al-Zuhri himself, it is claimed that upon his first meeting with 'Abd al-Malik the caliph ordered a court in Medina to be bought for the young scholar; *TMD, Zuhri*, 29 (*wa-shirā' dār qatī'a bi-al-Madinah*). Perhaps the meeting did not proceed exactly as described in this report; however, al-Zuhri's ownership of a court in Medina must be a historical fact.

¹³⁰ *TMD, Zuhri*, 167 (where both versions of this sentence are slightly garbled). Cf. *al-Ma'rīfah wa-al-ta'rikh*, I, 632 (*fa-kāna fī diyā'i-hi mā qadā dayna-hu*).

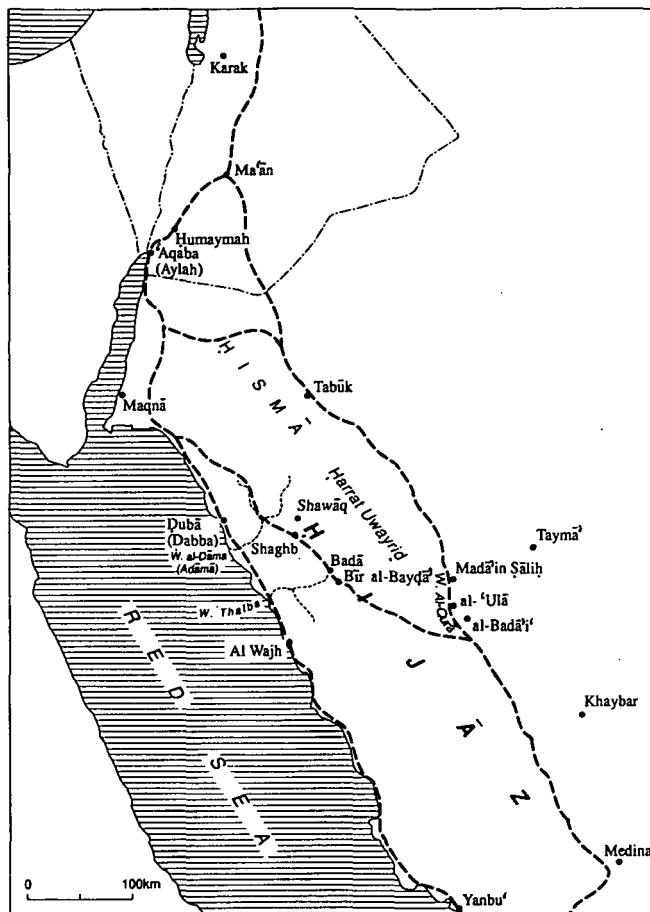
¹³¹ Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v.

¹³² *Li khamsatu a'yūn kullu 'ayn min-hā thamanu(!) arba'inā alfa dīnār wa-laysa yarīthūni illā bnu bnī hādhā, wa-mā ubālī an lā yarīthā 'annī shay'an... wa-kāna bnu bnī-hi fāsiqan*; *TMD, Zuhri*, 172. Instead of: *thaman*, read: *tamunnu*, 'they bestow', as in Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā'*, VII, 250. The water from the spring ('ayn) may have been brought to the cultivated land by means of an 'underground canal' (*qanāt* or *faqīr*); cf. 'Arrām b. al-Asbagh al-Sulamī, *Asmā' jibāl Tihāmah*, in *Nawādir al-makhṭūtāt*, ed. 'A. al-S. Hārūn, II (Cairo 1393/1973), 413, where it is said concerning a certain village: *wa-miyāhu-hā 'uyūn tajrī taḥt al-ard, fuqur kulluhā, wa-al-fuqur wa-al-qanāt wāhid, wa-wāhid al-fuqur — faqīr*.

Al-Zuhri may have bequeathed his property (or part of it) to his nephew, the well-known Ibn Akhī al-Zuhri; see above, n. 18.

¹³³ See below, n. 160.

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Location map of Zuhri's estates

property or part of it was developed by al-Zuhri himself. Agricultural work was carried out by slaves and indeed we find, in another context, evidence that al-Zuhri owned slaves ('*abid*): he used to give away everything he had, and when his own money was exhausted, he would borrow from his friends, and then from his slaves.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Naturally our informant is aware of the legal point at issue ('is it lawful for someone to borrow money from his slaves?'). See e.g. *TMD*, *Zuhri*, 170 (*wa-lā yarā bi-dhālika bāsan*). Al-Zuhri's *mawlā* Zakariyyā b. 'Isā al-Shaghbī (on Shaghbī see below), who transmitted from him, might have been a manumitted slave; *Sam'āni*, s.v. al-Shaghbī; al-Dhahabī, *al-Mushtabih fi al-rijāl, asmā'i-him wa-ansābi-him*, ed. 'A.M. al-Bijāwī (Cairo 1962), II, 397.

Far more important in the context of al-Zuhri's estate is the report about a merchant who, on his way to the pilgrimage, bought wheat (*burr*) from al-Zuhri, who was then in his *qaryah*, for a total of four hundred dinars which he was to pay on his way back from the pilgrimage.¹³⁵ We not only learn from this report that al-Zuhri grew wheat on his estate, but also that the estate was located on the pilgrim road, well placed to sell its products to the pilgrims. In fact, this may have been its *raison d'être*. Indeed, the estate, situated between the pilgrim roads of Syria and Egypt, was most favourably located for this purpose: Shaghb wa-Badā (after which the whole region was called) are two wadis which belonged (at some unspecified period) to the jurisdiction of Aylah. 'On them' (*wa-'alay-himā*) there was an estate where al-Zuhri used to stay, between the (pilgrim) roads of Egypt and Syria.¹³⁶ Shaghb (or Shaghbā) and Badā are also names of villages located near these wadis. The inland route between Aylah and Medina passed through Shaghb, then Badā (see map).¹³⁷ Two stations south of Badā, at al-Suqyā south of Wadi al-Qurā, the Syrian road and the Egyptian inland road converge.¹³⁸ Al-Zuhri asked to be buried in the middle of the road (see below); the road in question is the inland Egyptian pilgrim road.

It is noteworthy that the small village Badā had a *fādā'il*-tradition of its own which (perhaps not surprisingly) linked it to Egypt. Yāqūt describes Dabbah (which appears in the modern maps as Duba) as a village in Tihāmah on the shore near Shām (*mimmā yāti al-Shām*). He adds that opposite it (*bi-hidhā'i-hā*, i.e., inland) there is a village

¹³⁵ TMD, Zuhri, 175f (citing al-Shāfi'i). The variant *bazz* (e.g. in Dhahabī, *Tarājim rijāl*, 73; Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 246f) is erroneous: in the context of al-Zuhri's *qaryah*, *burr* is preferable.

¹³⁶ Sam'anī, s.v. al-Shaghbī: *Badā wa-Shaghb..wa-humā wādiyān min Aylah wa-'alay-himā ḥay'ah kāna yanṣilu-hā al-Zuhri... bayna ṭariq Miṣr wa-al-Shām*. The preposition *wa-'alay-himā* may suggest that the estate was irrigated by water from the two wadis. Cf. Jāsir's remark (*Manāsik*, 650, n. 5), that the Shaghb and Badā wadis converge. Badā and Shaghb are mentioned in the description of a place called Julayya: it is near Wadi al-Qurā, behind Badā and Shaghb; *Maghānim*, 89; Nasr, *Amkina*, 56b. On Wadi al-Qurā see A.A. Nasif, 'The Identification of the Wādī 'l-Qurā and the Ancient Islamic Site of al-Mibyāt', *Arabian Studies* 5 (1979), 1-19 (on p. 8 he states that it 'extends over an area of about 50 km. from Mada'in Shālih in the north to al-Badāyi', a railway station in the south'; see map).

¹³⁷ *Manāsik*, 650. Jāsir reports (n. 4) that Badā still exists as a village of 300 inhabitants.

¹³⁸ *Manāsik*, 650, 653; al-Ḥasan b. 'Abdallāh al-Isfahānī (Lughda), *Bilād al-Arab*, ed. H. al-Jāsir and S.A. al-'Alī (Riyadh 1968), 396. On this Suqyā (Suqyā al-Jazl) see al-Fākihī, *Akhbār Makkah*, ed. 'A. b. 'A. b. Duhaysh (Mecca 1407/1987), II, 368; Yāqūt, the end of s.v. Suqyā.

called Badā¹³⁹ which is the village of the prophet Ya‘qūb. Badā, located seventy miles from Ḏabbah, has an irrigation canal (*nahr jārin*). From Badā, Yāqūt concludes, Ya‘qūb went on to his son Yūsuf in Egypt.¹⁴⁰ Because of its association with Ya‘qūb, Badā was also called Badā Ya‘qūb.¹⁴¹

At some point during the caliphate of Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik the crown prince, al-Walid b. Yazīd, ordered the cutting down of the trees on al-Zuhri’s estate in Shaghb wa-Badā (written Badan wa-Shaghb). In the background was al-Zuhri’s attempt to convince Hishām that he should depose al-Walid. Since the legal status of the land was at issue, we are told in this context that al-Zuhri bought the estate from people who received it from the Prophet as a grant. The Prophet’s letter was held by al-Zuhri.¹⁴²

Beside Shaghb and Badā, a place called Th.l.bah/Th.l.yah is also associated with al-Zuhri’s estate. The correct name is Thalba. It is preserved in the name of Wadi Thalbah which can still be found on the modern maps of Saudi Arabia south of Shaghb. In 124/742, it is reported, al-Zuhri arrived at his estates (*amwāl*) in Thiluyah(!), in [the region of] Shaghb wa-Badā, where he stayed for some time. Then he became ill and died. He determined in his will that he be buried in the middle of the road (*fa-ausā an yudfana ‘alā qāri’at al-ṭarīq*).¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Written Badan, with a *tanwīn*.

¹⁴⁰ Yāqūt, s.v. Ḏabba. Musil, *The Northern Hegāz* (New York 1926), 135n, approximately confirms the distance between Ḏabbah and Badā as given by Yāqūt: in fact, Badā is 130 km., or over seventy miles, south-east (misprinted south-west in Musil) of Ḏabbah. Musil also remarks (135n, 313) that Badais mentioned by Ptolemy in the middle of the second century CE, to the south of Soaka (= Shawāq), is our Badā. For Soaka see the map in H.I. MacAdam, ‘Ptolemy’s Geography and the Wadi Sirhan’, in P.-L. Gatier *et al.* (eds.), *Géographie historique au proche-orient* (Paris 1988), at 66. In al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubb al-aṣḥā fi ṣinā’at al-inshā*, ed. M.H. Shams al-Dīn (Beirut 1407/1987), III, 445, instead of: *kūrat Badā Ya‘qūb wa-Shu‘ayb*, read: ... *wa-Shaghb*. Cf. correctly in Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-mawā’iz wa-al-i’tibār fi dhikr al-khitāṭ wa-al-akhbār*, ed. G. Wiet (Cairo 1911f), I,i, 311 (*kūrat Badā wa-Shaghb*). Cf. Musil, *The Northern Hegāz*, 256.

¹⁴¹ Yāqūt, s.v. Shaghbā.

¹⁴² TMD, *Mukht.*, XXVI, 366-67; TMD, *MS*, XVII, 947:17 (... *ishtarā-hu min qawm kāna al-nabī [s] aqta‘a la-hum, fa-akhraja kitāba-hu*). In both sources, read ‘Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik’ instead of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’. For a grant of the Prophet in the same area see Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym: A Contribution to the Study of Early Islam* (Jerusalem 1989), 185f, 194f: Qālis on the inland pilgrim route between Aylah and Medina. It is one station before Shaghb; al-Ya‘qūbī, *Buldān*, ed. de Goeje (Leiden 1892), 341:-4; Musil, *The Northern Hegāz*, 322.

¹⁴³ Ibn Sa‘d, *Qism mutammim*, 185 (< Wāqidī); TMD, *Zuhri*, 42. (Cf. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. *qāri’at al-ṭarīq*: ‘The higher, or highest, part of the road; the part that is trodden by the passengers.’) Wāqidī’s information creates for us an

His wish was fulfilled and he was buried in the middle of the road so that passers-by would pray for him.¹⁴⁴

Thalbah is also mentioned in connection with Ibn Akhī al-Zuhrī, 'al-Zuhrī's nephew' (= Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh) who was murdered by his slaves on his estate in Thalbah. They were acting on orders from his son, who wanted the bequest. Years later the son was himself murdered by the slaves.¹⁴⁵ We know that al-Zuhrī declared his lands *sadaqah* (charitable endowment). According to the testimony of his nephew, upon doing so al-Zuhrī appointed a *mawlā* of his to supervise the endowment because his nephew was too young. When the *mawlā* died, during al-Zuhrī's lifetime, his nephew was put in charge.¹⁴⁶

arithmetical problem: if indeed al-Zuhrī was born in 58 AH, he could not have been seventy-five when he died in 124! Cf. above, n. 92. It seems unlikely that Wāqidi, in his *Tārīkh* (cited in TMD, Zuhrī, 47), claimed that al-Zuhrī died aged ninety; probably *sab'ina* should be read, instead of: *tis'ina*; see also Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem*, 154, n. 35. Cf. TMD, Zuhrī, 41 (where the place is called Thalaba). Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāyah*, IX, 344:7, has two corrupt variants of the name.

¹⁴⁴ TMD, Zuhrī, 188f (citing al-Zubayr b. Bakkār). In Ibn Qutaybah, *Ma'ārif*, 472, we find an explicit statement that he was buried on his estate: *wa-dufina bi-māli-hi 'alā qāri'a at al-tariq... wa-al-mawdī' alladhbī dufina bi-hi ākhiru 'amal al-Hijāz wa-awwalu 'amal Filastīn, wa-bi-hi day'atū-hu*. See also Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamhīd*, VI, 113 (*wa-kānat wafātu-hu bi-day'ah la-hu bi-nāhiyat Shagħb wa-Badā, marida hunalika wa-awṣa an yudsana 'alā qāri'a at al-tariq fa-dufina bi-mawdī' yugālu la-hu Adāmā wa-hiya khalf Shagħb wa-Badā wa-hiya awwal 'amal Filastīn wa-ākhir 'amal al-Hijāz*); al-Isṭakhrī, *Masālik al-mamālik*, ed. de Goeje (Leiden 1927), 27:3 (... 'alā Badan wa-Shagħb qaryah bi-al-bādiyah kānū banū Marwān aqṭa'ū-hā al-Zuhriyyah al-muħaddith wa-bi-hā qabru-hu).

¹⁴⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *Qism mutammim*, 453 (*qatala-hu ghilmānu-hu bi-amri bni-hi fi amwāli-hi bi-Thalya[!] bi-nāhiyati Shagħb wa-Badā. Wa-kāna bnu-hu safiħan shātiran qatala-hu li-l-mirāth, wa-dħalika fi ākhiri khilafati Abī Ja'far, thumma wathaba ghilmānu-hu 'alay-hi fa-qatalū-hu ba'da sinīna aydan*). See also TMD, MS, XV, 558:5, 560:2 (*qatala-hu ghilmānu-hu bi-amri bni-hi fi amwāli-hi bi-Thalba* [this is the correct place-name] *bi-nāhiyat Shagħb wa-Badā*); TMD, *Mukht.*, XXII, 330 (he was murdered *fi amwāli-hi bi-nāhiyati Shagħb wa-Badā*; the murder took place in 152/769). According to another report, the nephew's murder took place in 157/774; E. Sachau, 'Studien zur ältesten Geschichtsüberlieferung der Araber', *Mitteilungen des Seminars f. orientalische Sprachen* (Berlin), 2. Abt. 7 (1904), 154-96, at 165 = al-Dhahabi, *Tadhhib al-tadhhib*; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhib al-kamāl*, XXV, 559.

¹⁴⁶ The nephew reported: *habasa al-Zuhrī amwālan la-hu wa-dafa'a-hā ilā mawlan la-hu fa-māta al-mawlā fi hayāti-hi fa-ja'alanī makāna-hu wa-kuntu yawma taṣaddaqa bi-hā wa-dafa'a-hā ilā al-mawlā lam ablugh thumma adraktu ba'da-hu* (read: *ba'du?*); al-Khaṣṣāf, *Ahkām al-awqāf* (Cairo 1322/1904), 17f. Note that elsewhere we find that upon al-Zuhrī's death, 'Shagħb' (i.e., probably al-Zuhrī's estate in the Shagħb wa-Badā region) was sold in order to cover his debts; Dhahabi, *Nubalā'*, V, 342. Perhaps only part of it was sold. For the identity of the man who managed al-Zuhrī's estate (*wakil al-Zuhrī bi-day'ati-hi [bi-]Shagħb wa-Badā*), see al-Mizzī, *Tahdhib al-kamāl*, XVIII, 491-2.

Regarding the reliability of the *hadīths* which a traditionist from Aylah (the above mentioned ‘Uqayl b. Khālid al-Aylī) transmitted from al-Zuhrī, it is reported that al-Zuhrī used to stay in Aylah and that he had an estate there.¹⁴⁷ In actual fact, the estate was far from Aylah (although at some point the region of Shaghb wa-Badā belonged to the jurisdiction of Aylah).¹⁴⁸

5. Other Estates Owned by Qurashīs in the Same Region

At this point we digress a little to discuss the information about two Qurashī notables who owned estates in the region of Shaghb wa-Badā. They were attracted to the area by its favourable agricultural conditions and its location near the pilgrim roads. The two Qurashīs were the fourth caliph, ‘Alī, and the father of the ‘Abbāsid caliphs, ‘Alī b. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās.

Ibn Shabbah provides rich evidence about the estates of ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib. However, we are only concerned here with those located in the rugged tract called Ḥarrat al-Rajlā’. These included two wadis, al-Āḥmar and al-Baydā’, and a few wells.¹⁴⁹ About al-Āḥmar we are told: *wa-la-hu bi-Ḥarrat al-Rajlā’ min nāhiyat Sh.‘.b. Z.y.d. wādin yud‘ā al-Āḥmar*.¹⁵⁰ Instead of Sh.‘.b. Z.y.d., read Shaghb wa-Badā. This reading can be corroborated by the following identification of the other wadi owned by ‘Alī in Ḥarrat al-Rajlā’, namely al-Baydā’. Some 60 km. south-east of Shaghb as the crow flies we find on the modern maps of Saudi Arabia Bi’r al-Baydā’, near a wadi of the same name (see map). This is presumably ‘Alī’s estate, and wadi al-Āḥmar should be looked for in the same vicinity.

We now turn to ‘Alī b. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās. At the end of his extensive history of Medina, Samhūdī (d. 911/1505) includes a geographical dictionary of place-names in Medina and its vicinity. Under Badā’ he says that ‘Alī b. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās and his children lived there (*Badā’: mawdī’ qurb Wādī al-Qurā kāna bi-hi manzil ‘Alī*

¹⁴⁷ *Wa-kāna al-Zubrī yakūnu bi-Ayla wa-li-l-Zubrī hunāka ḏay‘a wa-kāna yak-tubu ‘an-hu hunāka; Tahdh., VII, 256.* On ‘Uqayl see above, n. 21.

¹⁴⁸ See above, n. 136.

¹⁴⁹ Ibn Shabbah, *Madinah*, I, 219f, especially 224f.

¹⁵⁰ See also Samhūdī, II, 1186. Jāsir, who adduces the same text, has, instead of Sh.‘.b. Z.y.d.: *Sh.‘.b. R.b.dā’*; Jāsir, *Fi Shimāl għarbi al-jazirah* (Riyadh 1401/1981), 306 (the second *bā’* is without a diacritical point), 513. Cf. S. A. el-Ali, ‘Muslim Estates in Hidjaz in the First Century A.H.’, *JESHO* 2 (1959), 247-61, at 257 (Shi‘b Zayd).

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b. *Abdallāh b. al-‘Abbās wa-awlādi-hi*).¹⁵¹ A passage in the *Lisān al-‘arab*, which was compiled some two centuries before Samhūdī's history, and in Ibn al-Athīr's *hadīth* dictionary, compiled about three centuries before Samhūdī's history,¹⁵² takes us a little further: *wa-fi hadīth al-Zuhri annahu kāna la-hu māl bi-Shaghb wa-Badā, humā mawdī‘āni bi-al-Shām, wa-bi-hi* [presumably, in the region of Shaghb wa-Badā] *kāna muqāmu ‘Alī b. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās wa-awlādi-hi ilā an wasalat ilay-himi al-khilāfah*. This information is of course problematic: the well-known place associated with ‘Alī b. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās and his sons is al-Humaymah, situated south-west of Ma‘ān (see map).¹⁵³ These texts, though not completely clear, are very interesting. They appear to reflect a variant version concerning the place inhabited by the ‘Abbāsids prior to their revolution.

The aforementioned information about ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib's estates leads to the following identification of Harrat al-Rajlā': since wadi al-Āḥmar was in Harrat al-Rajlā', in the vicinity (*min nāḥiyat*) of Shaghb wa-Badā, Harrat al-Rajlā' must be identical to the Harrah known today as Harrat ‘Uwayrid (see map). The same conclusion is reached if we assume that wadi al-Baydā' is identical, as has just been argued, with its namesake found on the modern map of Saudi Arabia.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ Samhūdī, s.v., II, 1145. Among the owners of estates in the nearby Wadi al-Qurā we find the third caliph ‘Uthmān, who declared his estate a charitable endowment (*sadaqah*); cf. el-Ali, ‘Muslim Estates’, 256; Ibn Sa‘d, III, 77. Also ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib owned a *sadaqah* in Wadi al-Qurā; ‘Abd al-Razzāq, *al-Musannaf*, ed. H. al-R. al-A‘zamī (Beirut 1390/1970-1392/1972), X, 375 (written once, erroneously: Wadi Umm al-Qurā).

¹⁵² *Lisān al-‘arab*, s.v. *sh.gh.b.*; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fi gharib al-hadīth wa-al-athar*, ed. T. A. al-Zāwī and M. M. al-Tanāhī (Cairo 1385/1965), s.v. *sh.gh.b.*

¹⁵³ See e.g. Bakrī, s.v. Adhrūḥ, 130; Balādhūrī, *Ansāb*, III, 79f (‘Alī died at al-Humaymah in 117/735), 87 (Muhammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abdallāh, who died in 124/742, had in al-Humaymah 500 trees, and [every day] he used to pray under each of them two *rak’abs*); cf. *Akhbār al-dawlah al-‘Abbāsiyyah*, ed. ‘A. al-‘A. al-Dūrī and ‘A. al-J. al-Muṭṭalibī (Beirut 1971), 108 (‘Alī b. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās bought a *qaryah* called al-Humaymah in a *rustaq* located between Shām and Medina); *EP*, s.v. al-Humayma (D. Sourdel).

¹⁵⁴ The identification of Harrat al-Rajlā' with Harrat ‘Uwayrid appears to conform to Aṣmā‘ī's identification of Harrat al-Rajlā' as a Harrah in the territory (*diyār*) of the Banū al-Qayn b. Jāṣr (a subdivision of the Qudā‘ah) located between Medina and Shām; Yāqūt, s.v. al-Harrah al-Rajlā'. The Banū al-Qayn lived (viz. in the early days of Islam) *fi aknāf al-Shām*, ‘on the sides (or edges) of Shām’; Ibn Hazm, *Ansāb*, 454. Elsewhere we find that Harrat [al-]Rajlā' is in the territory of Judhām; Bakrī, s.v. Harrat al-Rajlā', 436. See also Ibn Hishām, *al-Sirah al-nabawiyah*, ed. al-Saqqā, al-Abyarī and Shalabī (Beirut 1391/1971), IV, 243. The Judhām were the neighbours of the Banū al-Qayn. An estate of ‘Alī called al-Qusaybah was (in) *nāḥiyat Fadak... bi-a‘lā Harrat al-Rajlā'*; Ibn Shabbah, *Madinah*, I, 225. See also Samhūdī, II,

6. The Boundary between Palestine and the Hijāz in the Early Islamic Period

The modern maps of Saudi Arabia are an indispensable tool in the study of the history of pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabia. The place-names associated with al-Zuhri's estate, namely Shaghb, Badā, Thalbah and Adāmā, can all be found within a small area of north-western Saudi Arabia (see map). This merits special emphasis. I believe that a growing tendency, among Arabists and Islamicists, to relate the literary evidence to the geographical one is an inevitable development in the study of Arabia. We now have better maps than ever before, as well as new editions of medieval Arabic texts on the geography of Arabia, and specialized surveys of certain areas prepared by local scholars. All these research devices make it easier for us to locate, within obvious limitations, many of the places mentioned in the primary sources.

The evidence concerning al-Zuhri's estate often refers to the boundary between Shām, more precisely the Filastīn district, and the Hijāz.¹⁵⁵ For instance, it is said that al-Zuhri's tomb is in Adāmā 'behind' Shaghb wa-Badā, which is the boundary between Filastīn and the Hijāz. In it (i.e., in Adāmā), the report continues, there was an estate belonging to al-Zuhri, where he lived. The source of this account is al-Husayn b. al-Mutawakkil al-'Asqalānī (Ibn Abī al-Sarī,

1186; Jāsir, *Fī Shimāl gharb al-jazīrah*, 306, 513, 580f. Cf. Jāsir, *op. cit.*, 512 (Harrat 'Uwayrid used to be called of old Harrat al-Kuraytīm); Ḥamad al-Jāsir, *Abū Ali al-Hajārī wa-abhāthu-hu fī tabdīd al-mawādi* (Riyadh 1968), 231.

¹⁵⁵ Shaghb, Badā and Adāmā were already mentioned in connection with the northern Hijāzī border by Abdullāh al-Wohāibi, *The Northern Hijaz in the Writings of the Arab Geographers 800-1150* (Beirut 1973), 251-2, who employed the entry on al-Zuhri in Ibn Khallikān's *Wafayāt al-a'yān* (= ed. I. 'Abbās [Beirut 1968-72], IV, 177-9), as well as the geographical works of Yāqūt, al-Bakrī and Naṣr al-Iskandarāni. See also H. Lammens, 'L'ancienne frontière entre la Syrie et le Higāz: Notes de géographie historique', in *l'Arabie occidentale avant l'Hégire* (Beirut 1928), 295-331, especially 315-16, 325, 330.

Ibn Khallikān (178) has two forms of the last-mentioned place-name: Adāmā and Adamā; see also *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, ed. M.M. al-D. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo 1948), III, 318. Ibn Khallikān adds a new place-name to those already mentioned above in connection with al-Zuhri. He quotes a passage from [Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's] *al-Tambīd* according to which al-Zuhri died in his house in Na'f, defined as a *qaryah 'ind al-qurā al-madhbūrah*, i.e., Shaghb, Badā and Adāmā/Adamā. Surprisingly, there is no mention of Na'f in Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Tambīd*, VI, 113. 'Na'f' (if it is not a corruption of 'Shaghb') might have been identical with the village called al-Na'f on the road to al-Hijr, between al-'Ulā and Tabūk; for its mention see Jāsir, *Fī Shimāl gharb al-jazīrah*, 586.

d. 240/854).¹⁵⁶ He said about al-Zuhri's grave, which he had seen, that it was elevated, plastered with gypsum, and white.¹⁵⁷ The place-name Adāmā is probably preserved in Wadi al-Dāmah (see map) and Adāmā should be looked for along this wadi.¹⁵⁸

There are contradictory statements, possibly referring to different periods, concerning the administrative district to which Adāmā belonged. On the one hand, we are told that Adāmā, while being close to the Hijāz, was outside it (i.e., in Filasṭīn).¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, we find that al-Adāmā¹ (*sic*) was one of the regions (*a'rād*) of Medina (i.e., it was included in the Hijāz). The source of the latter statement also reports that al-Zuhri had palm trees there which he planted when he became old (*asanna*). We are told that al-Adāmā¹, which some call al-Udāmā¹ (these are variants of the name Adāmā), is a place in the lands of the Qudā'ah in Shām.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, the 'Udhrah, a subdivision of the Qudā'ah, were the dominant ingredient in the population of this area: Shaghbā (= Shaghb), 'the village of al-Zuhri', was in the land of the 'Udhrah.¹⁶¹

The statement that the northern border of the Hijāz was at Shaghb wa-Badā¹⁶² presumably includes the Shaghb wa-Badā region

¹⁵⁶ Not to be confused with his brother Muḥammad, who was also called Ibn Abī al-Sarī. Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn referred to Muḥammad as *muḥaddith Filasṭīn*; Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, XI, 161.

¹⁵⁷ TMD, Zuhri, 181 (*ra'aytu qabr al-Zuhri bi-Adāmā, wa-hiya khalfa Shaghb wa-Badā, wa-hiya awwalu 'amal Filasṭīn wa-ākkhiru 'amal al-Hijāz, wa-bi-hā ḏay'atū al-Zuhri allatī kāna fī-hā, wa-ra'aytu qabra-hu musannaman, mujaṣṣaṣan, abyada*). Also Ya'qūb b. Sufyān al-Fasawī (d. 277/890) saw the grave; see his *al-Ma'rifah wa-al-ta'rikh*, III, 348. He reports that al-Zuhri was buried in an elevated piece of ground, *fī nashz/nashaz min al-ard* (erroneously printed *nashar*). Cf. the expression *qāri'at al-ṭariq* above, n. 143. Sam'ānī (d. 562/1167, in s.v. al-Zuhri) still reports that al-Zuhri's grave is well known and that it is a place of pilgrimage (*mashhūr yuzāru*), but he may be quoting an earlier text.

¹⁵⁸ Upon the Arabization of this place-name, the 'A' became an article.

¹⁵⁹ TMD, Zuhri, 46 (al-Zuhri died in Adāmā, *qarib min ardi al-Hijāz wa-hiya min a'māl Filasṭīn*) Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓam*, VII, 235.

¹⁶⁰ Naṣr, *Amkinah*, 17a; Yāqūt, s.v. Adāmā (citing Naṣr).

¹⁶¹ Yāqūt, s.v. Shaghbā. Also Yāqūt, s.v. Badan: 'a valley near Aylah on the shore, and some said: in Wadi al-Qurā, and some said: in Wadi 'Udhrah near Shām'. The three definitions refer to one and the same place. The Banū 'Udhrah are known to have inhabited the nearby Wadi al-Qurā as well. See also *Maghānim*, 206: Shaghbā/Shaghb is the village of al-Zuhri. Also Yāqūt, s.v. Shaghb: it is an estate 'behind' (viz. to the north-west of) Wadi al-Qurā which belonged to al-Zuhri, and his tomb is in it. As we have seen (above, n. 154), the Banū al-Qayn b. Jāṣr of the Qudā'ah were associated with the adjacent Harrat al-Rajlā' (identified above with the modern Harrat 'Uwayrid).

¹⁶² Bakrī, 10f. Cf. the incomplete quotation of this text in Samhūdī, II, 1182; *Maghānim*, 102; Yāqūt, s.v. al-Hijāz, 219 (who specifies that the text is from Aṣma'ī's *Kitāb jazīrat al-'arab*).

in the Hijāz.¹⁶³ The same state of affairs is roughly reflected in the accounts about the expulsion of the Jews from the Hijāz by the caliph ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. He expelled the Jews of Khaybar and Fadak, but not those of Taymā’ and Wadi al-Qurā, because the latter were included in *ard al-Shām*. He considered the area ‘beneath’ (*dūna*, i.e., south of) Wadi al-Qurā part of the Hijāz, and the area ‘beyond’ it (*warā’ a dhālika*, i.e., Wadi al-Qurā itself and the area north of it) part of Shām.¹⁶⁴

There are further indications, derived from the reports about the conflict between the Umayyads and Ibn al-Zubayr, that the border between the Hijāz and Shām (more precisely, Filastīn) was in the vicinity of Wadi al-Qurā. The northern Hijāz was an important venue during this conflict, hence the relative wealth of evidence.¹⁶⁵ At some point — Ibn al-Zubayr’s governor in Medina was then al-Hārith b. Hāṭib al-Jumāḥī — we hear of Khaybar and Fadak being included in al-Hārith’s jurisdiction: he was ordered by Ibn al-Zubayr to appoint a certain Anṣārī as the governor of these two agricultural settlements.¹⁶⁶ With regard to an attack on this governor we hear of a boundary between Shām and Ibn al-Zubayr’s territory (i.e., the Hijāz): when an expedition force sent by ‘Abd al-Malik reached the northern edge of Ibn al-Zubayr’s area of jurisdiction, Ibn al-Zubayr’s tax collectors fled. Then ‘Abd al-Malik advanced and encamped at Wadi al-Qurā, from where he sent his cavalry to attack Khaybar and Fadak.¹⁶⁷ The reference to the evacuation of Ibn al-Zubayr’s

¹⁶³ Muqaddasī explicitly includes Badā Ya‘qūb in the Hijāz; *Ahsan al-taqāsim*, ed. de Goeje (Leiden 1906), 69, 84 (Badā Ya‘qūb is on *jāddat Miṣr*).

¹⁶⁴ Al-Wāqidi, *Kitāb al-maghāzi*, ed. M. Jones (London 1966), II, 711. Note that one medieval scholar argued that Tabūk and Filastīn(!) were part of the Hijāz; Samhūdī, s.v. Hijāz, II, 1184:1. The scholar in question is not al-Huraqī(!) but Ibrāhīm al-Harbi; see Bakrī, 12 and Yāqūt, s.v. al-Hijāz, 219.

Incidentally, ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz instructed his governor in Egypt, Ḥayyān b. Shurayh, to expel Coptic criminals to Shaghb wa-Badā; Muranyī, *‘Abd Allāh b. Wahb*, 313.

¹⁶⁵ The information given below refers to different stages in the conflict.

¹⁶⁶ On these events see the section entitled ‘Der Zugang zum Ḥiḡāz’ in Rotter, *Die Umayyaden*, 182f.

¹⁶⁷ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, XI, 35 (*fa-lammā nazala awwala ‘amal bn al-Zubayr mimmā yali al-Shām haraba ‘ummālu-hu wa-ṣāra ‘Abdu l-Malik hattā nazala Wādiya al-Qurā wa-wajjaha min-hā [sic] khaylan etc.*). In connection with Ibn al-Zubayr’s governor in Wadi al-Qurā we come across a valuable detail, namely that Ibn al-Zubayr was storing there a large quantity of dates received as taxes (i.e., in kind); see Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, XI, 49; Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, V, 363 (*wa-kāna li-bn al-Zubayr bi-hā tamr kathīr min tamr al-sadaqa*). A governor of Ibn al-Zubayr in Wadi al-Qurā is mentioned in the account of the battle of al-Rabadhah (65/684-5), which took place

northern border by his tax collectors is important. After their flight (no doubt together with their garrisons), 'Abd al-Malik could come to Wadi al-Qurā, formerly under Ibn al-Zubayr's control, and send his cavalry deep into Ibn al-Zubayr's territory. In sum, the boundary between the two parties, which was at the same time the boundary between the Hijāz and Shām, was in the vicinity of Wadi al-Qurā.

At a later stage in the conflict the name of Tāriq b. 'Amr, a *maulā* of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, emerges.¹⁶⁸ Again we find a reference to Ibn al-Zubayr's fiscal administration: 'Abd al-Malik instructed Tāriq 'to camp at [i.e., to patrol] the area between Aylah and Wadi al-Qurā, prevent Ibn al-Zubayr's tax collectors from spreading, defend the area between him [i.e., Ibn al-Zubayr] and Shām, and close up a gap should he discover one'.¹⁶⁹ Wadi al-Qurā was the base of Tāriq b. 'Amr's operations against Ibn al-Zubayr: it is reported that after the attack on Ibn al-Zubayr's men at Khaybar, Tāriq returned to Wadi al-Qurā, and his patrols¹⁷⁰ remained active in the area between Medina, Wadi al-Qurā and Aylah.¹⁷¹

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when the caliph Marwān b. al-Hakam was still alive: a troop under Ḥubaysh b. Duljah al-Qaynī sent by Marwān arrived at Wadi al-Qurā, and Ibn al-Zubayr's governor there fled; Rotter, *Die Umayyaden*, 158f; Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, V, 150f.

¹⁶⁸ See an entry about him in *TMD, MS, VIII, 488f; Tahdh., V, 5f*. For the date see Rotter, *Die Umayyaden*, 186. See above, nn. 113, 114.

¹⁶⁹ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, XI, 36 (*wa-amara-hu an yanzila bayna Aylah wa-Wādī al-Qurā fa-yamna'a 'ummāla bn al-Zubayr mina li-'ntishār wa-yahfaza mā bayna-hu wa-bayna al-Shām wa-yasudda khalalan in zahara la-hu*). A slightly different version of these instructions (*TMD, MS, VIII, 488; TMD, Tahdh., VII, 43*) refers to 'Abd al-Malik's tax collectors in this border area between the dominions of 'Abd al-Malik and Ibn al-Zubayr: *wa-amara-hu an yakūna fīmā bayna Aylah ilā Wādī al-Qurā madadan li-man yahtāju ilay-hi min 'ummāl 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān aw man kāna yurīdu gitāla-hu min ashābi bn al-Zubayr*.

¹⁷⁰ Presumably, this is the meaning of the term *sayyārah*.

¹⁷¹ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, XI, 36f.

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